FAIRVILLE

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D2.1

Draft of a common glossary and common grid of analysis

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Context - What is a glossary, what is it for?

by Claire Bénit-Gbaffou

FAIRVILLE glossary - objective & ideas

- A set of key terms we (as members of the FAIRVILLE consortium or as people interested in issues of coproduction, inequality and democracy) use, and for which we actually do not necessarily share the same understanding - depending on our contexts, our histories, our positions, our trajectories. The glossary Is not meant for choosing one common definition above others, but rather mixing, juxtaposing and hopefully debating, contrasting and reflecting on the different meanings we vest In the terms we use. It is an effort aimed at problematizing the terms and their use rather than fixing definitions.
- A format that allows this diversity of voices and some freedom in the format. The glossary will mix different types of contributions : academic and non-academic voices; texts mostly but it could also include images, pictures and maps; definitions and debates but also case studies, stories, subjective accounts.
- A careful use of terms and explanations to allow a diversity of academic, activist and "ordinary" citizens looking for definitions and maybe some practical orientations in the variety of notions and streams.
- A process where a non-exhaustive list of key terms, concepts or themes related to the FAIRVILLE programme Is chosen collectively - from the core notions of the programme to terms and themes that several members of the consortium feel are meaningful for their contexts or others.
- A cloud of connected terms and themes, with hyperlinks that suggest a way of navigating the Glossary to the reader - rather than an attempt to be exhaustive as a dictionary.

An initial academic approach

This draft glossary presents initial academic approaches to core terms and themes related to FAIRVILLE, confronting various definitions and debates, reflecting on how concepts have been used in academic literatures from various contexts, and providing selected references for readers wanting to go further. Some case studies illustrating the themes have also been included, but to a limited extent - the idea being also for consortium members to add stories and case studies to illustrate, challenge, nuance, contextualise or debate those academic reflections.

An initial academic approach of this set of terms was needed for the following reasons:

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- Because of the diversity and breadth of the existing academic literature existing on a number of key concepts we are using in FAIRVILLE, a lot of work was required to construct an overview, presenting a synthesis of academic findings, its debates, its concepts, as a basis for broader discussion.
- “Academics” are far from being a united and homogenous body: all the more we come from different disciplines, different academic cultures and national contexts, different theoretical and political positionings. The collective making of each of these notices has assisted in identifying or illuminating some of the key academic differences and debates at hand, which have resonance for the broader consortium.
- The role of academics and the type of research conducted in FAIRVILLE project are being defined, with on the one hand a shared commitment to action-research and forms of epistemic justice, and on the other hand a wide diversity of views and research practices, a multiplicity of members (within academia but also among civil society partners), getting to know one another. To reflect on the contribution academic research can make to FAIRVILLE, academics needed to find the space to reflect on what this academic contribution could be, moving from individual contributions to collective endeavors.

What drove this draft glossary’s writing process, however, was the awareness of one key challenge for academic contributors (see “epistemic justice” in this glossary) : to try and “translate” academic knowledge and its specific language and concerns, into public knowledge, with clear and jargon-less language, for a broader audience. We did not always succeed in this translation : to do that requires mastery of the field of knowledge presented, that we did not always have or are in the process of developing. But we certainly tried - with collective writing, rounds of editions of each term’s notice. This is in any case a step in this direction, that should be consolidated through further debate within the broader consortium.

Process so far, process ahead

Several elements are to be constructed collectively:

- the choice and selection of the terms and themes to be included In the glossary
- the texts/ images/ voices that will feature under each selected terms/theme (starting with academic definitions and debates and expanding to other voices, or to be initiated by any member)
- the form that the final glossary will take as a collective and public output -format, media, audience, etc.
- the languages selected

Below are the steps that have been taken so far:

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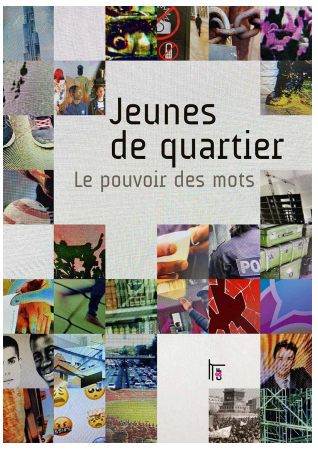
	Selection of terms	Definitions, uses, debates, contexts	Format of the glossary
Paris 2023	Selection of core terms - from FAIRVILLE programme	Initial definitions of core terms presented and debated	
Jan-Nov 2023		Draft versions of core terms & themes: academic definitions and debates	
Brussels 2023	Selection of other terms/ themes to be included in the glossary - the commons, participation, facilitation/ mediation, care…	Presentation and debate of selected terms & themes: coproduction, empowerment, environmental justice, Inequality - starting to hear other voices, uses, meanings	Presentation of various existing glossaries, to collectively reflect on how we want to proceed with the FAIRVILLE one
Nov 2023-Feb 2024		Consolidated versions of core terms and themes: academic definitions and debates	

A first engagement between academic definitions and broader consortium was organised: the liveliness of the conversation demonstrated both the interest and relevance of such a process, but also that this engagement does require a large amount of work and time, if we want it translated into a written text for a glossary.

Different types of glossary

We have not yet either collectively decided what we would like the final glossary to look like - this still needs to be debated and decided, in principle and in practice as we see how different members join the process of consolidating the glossary, and what spaces and resources are opened in FAIRVILLE to conduct such collective writing process.

So far, different types of glossary were presented and discussed (Brussels 2023):



- Collective POP PART, Bacqué MH, Demoulin J, (eds), 2021, *Jeunes de quartier - le pouvoir des mots* – Paris, C&F. Website: https://jeunesdequartier.fr/: a lexicon created within a collaborative project between academics, youth from popular neighborhoods and facilitators, where extensive workshops were committed to jointly select terms that had meaning for all, and to co-write various texts around each of the terms. The

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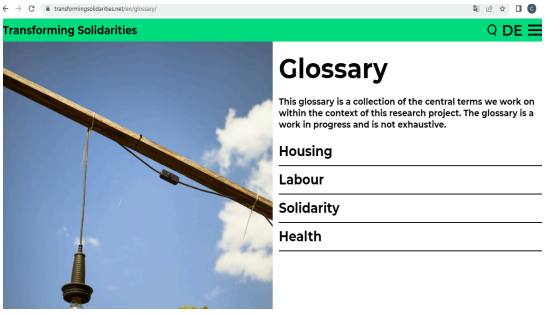
result is a lexicon with diverse voices expressing situated visions around a term or a theme – with a long but accessible academic analysis, and various testimonies, poetry, analyses, by facilitators and by the youth. What is important to keep in mind however, is that an important amount of time and resource of the POP PART programme was devoted to the writing process - with specific writing and art workshops aimed at collecting this multiplicity of voices.

- Transforming Solidarities: Praktiken und Infrastrukturen in der Migrationgesellschaft, https://transformingsolidarities.net/en/glossary/ is an online glossary created by academics in the context of a research programme on migration in Berlin. The glossary is structured into four key entries: Housing, Labour, Solidarity and Heath, which propose clear and accessible definitions, key controversies, and selected references. They are written by academics. These four themes also structure the project's website and its community oriented and academic activities.



- Observatorio Metropolitano de Madrid, 2017*, Diccionario de las Peripferias: Metodos y sabares autonomos desde los barrios*, https://traficantes.net/sites/default/files/pdfs/UTIL19_diccionario_0.pdf This book is constituted with a long introduction reflecting academically on peripheries and different types of knowledge, and a glossary consisting of stories, dialogues, maps, scenes constructed in dialogue with residents and activists, and related to ways of naming things in popular neighbourhoods of Madrid. The book pays specific attention to the oral, local and popular uses of certain terms and expressions, which can vary from one neighborhood to another in the same city.

- DicoPart : The *Dictionnaire critique et interdisciplinaire de la Participation*, https://www.dicopart.fr/ is an online editorial project launched in 2013 by francophone academics gathered into the national scientific network GIS démocratie et participation, aiming to structure the debate and stakes around participation, democracy and citizenship. Rather than fixed definitions of words and terms, it exposes the multiple uses, meanings and critiques their being subject of, in order to reflect the diversity and heterogeneity of the

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participation's world, actors and approaches. Each notice first proposes one or many simple definitions, followed by a presentation of the main controversy or stakes around it and finally a brief bibliography. Interactive, the dictionary offers a classical alphabetic index, a thematic one with twelve different entries and an organization by popularity. Notices are also interlinked with others by keywords and related expressions. The project is conceived as evolving and has already been subjected to a second edition adding new entries and updating old ones, enabling the consultation of the previous.

These examples helped clarify the choices we will need to make in the next stage of this glossary:

- Creating an online glossary or aiming at a printed book?
- Developing our own FAIRVILLE glossary or contributing with FAIRVILLE inputs to existing online glossaries on related topics?
- Developing a syllabus. For example, see : "Imperialism a syllabus" https://www.publicbooks.org/imperialism-a-syllabus/
- Devoting FAIRVILLE time to collective writing sessions around key terms/ themes, or (more likely) open the writing process to any member, soliciting specific contributions with editing assistance if needed?

These choices and the processes related to these choices will need to be made in the next phase of the programme, starting from April 2024.

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List of terms & themes presented in the draft Glossary

- **Coproduction** - by Giuseppe Faldi, Agnès Deboulet & Claire Bénit-Gbaffou, with Mathilde Jourdam-Boutin
- **Empowerment** - by Maripaz Agundez & Anna Steigemann, with Claire Bénit-Gbaffou & Agnès Deboulet
- **Environmental Justice** - by Grégory Busquet with Claire Bénit-Gbaffou & Giorgos Velegrakis
- **Epistemic Justice** - by Agnès Deboulet & Barbara Lipietz, with Claire Bénit-Gbaffou
- **Inequality & social/spatial injustice** - by Philippe Urvoy & Alfonso Alfonsi
- **Institutionnalisation & institutional activism** - by Claire Bénit-Gbaffou with Agnès Deboulet & Mathilde Jourdam Boutin
- **Mobilisation** - by Ben Kerste & Philippe Urvoy
- **Municipalism** - by Alessio Koliulis & Claire Bénit-Gbaffou
- **Participation (in planning)** - by Alessio Koliulis & Claire Bénit-Gbaffou

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Coproduction

by Guiseppe Faldi, Agnès Deboulet & Claire Bénit-Gbaffou
with Mathilde Jourdam-Boutin

A presentation of what academic literature says on some aspects relevant for FAIRVILLE

Understanding co-production

The concept of co-production has often been the subject of different, sometimes contradictory, at least contrasted, understandings. Within a multiplicity of existing interpretations of the term, often reflecting the experiences of those using it, two main understandings prevail:

1. A more classic definition of co-production linked to forms of collaborative engagements between civil society and state institutions ("state" in the broad sense of public authorities). Hereinafter we refer to it as **institutional coproduction**.
2. A definition of co-production as a form of community mobilisation around alternative urban strategies, policies and projects through engagements with community facilitators, NGOs, and Universities. Hereinafter we refer to it as **community-driven coproduction**.

Both understandings stem from Ostrom's seminal definition of co-production as the '*the process through which inputs used to produce a good or service is contributed by individuals who are not "in" the same organization*' (Ostrom 1996: XX). However, the tension between these two interpretations, which place "the state" (public authorities) in very different positions towards the process of co-production, has to be taken into account in order to provide proper definitions of co-production. Namely, the second definition is in many instances devoid of state/local authorities participation at least in a first stage

Different definitions of co-production

- *Institutional co-production*

The idea of institutional co-production can be traced back to the literature on public management, which holds the strongest legacy in the study of the governance-institutional dimension of service co-production since its first conceptualisation by Ostrom. Of the many definitions of co-production within this literature (see for example Boivard, 2007, Nabatchi et al., 2017), we particularly refer to Joshi and Moore (2004) that identified institutional(ised) co-production as "*the provision of public*

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services (broadly defined, to include regulation) through regular, long-term relationships between state agencies and organised groups of citizens, where both make substantial resource contributions".

Institutional(ised) co-production includes all form of hybrid, complex and informal interactions between public authorities and organised groups of citizens in the production of a service – either logistical (poor management capacity) and governance (declining governance capacity) driven – grounded on relationships that might be "*undefined, informal and renegotiated continuously*". This conception, in which the state (or public authorities) is a direct party co-producing an urban good, moves closer to an idea of co-production as a practice of collaborative planning involving state and citizens in improving certain aspects or outcomes of their lives. The emphasis is even sometimes put on the most marginalised populations, or on issues of socio-spatial justice (Watson, 2004).
Who initiates the co-production process (state or community) will have consequences on the form it takes (Watson, 2014). Mees et al. (2018) proposed some categories that may be useful to study relations between state and citizens during initialisation and evolutions of (service) co-production:

- **Hierarchical co-production** (top-down): when public authorities legally enforce inhabitants to take specific measures related to the production of a service
- **Incentivised co-production**: when there is an attempt to encourage citizens to co-produce a service by providing financial and/or non-financial incentives
- **Deliberative co-production** (bottom-up): a co-production type that can be built on multi-directional dialogue and cooperation between citizens and public authorities
- **Substitutive co-production**: it includes situations, in which users' efforts replace actions that would otherwise have been taken by public authorities.
- **Complementary co-production**: it includes situations in which users' efforts to co-produce aspects of an urban service in a way complements (instead of replacing or reducing) existing state activities.

❖ *Community-driven co-production*

In contrast but related to "institutional participation", , we define in Fairville community-driven co-production as the

> "*processes through which inhabitants (residents or users) of a neighbourhood (or area) come together to produce (define, conceptualise, construct) a common good or service in their direct environment*".

This definition emphasizes the process of community building and mobilization through the process of producing concrete outputs (goods, services, mapping, etc). Indeed, inhabitants not only construct it as an alternative, a complement, in replacement or in opposition, to state-provided urban goods and services judged insufficient, inadequate or absent. Through these processes, the

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group also erects itself as a (local) “community” and may even take part to a (supra local) “network” or “movement”, most often engaging with, seeking out or being approached by an array of universities, professionals and technicians, facilitators and intermediaries.

Three approaches (rather than definitions) to community-driven co-production can be broadly identified, sometimes overlapping :

- **Service co-production** is the closest to institutional co-production, but centred on the role and place of grassroots movements when they initiate such processes.
- **Housing co-production** is sometimes in between the first and third, with strong associations between stakeholders but a very large set of initiatives given to communities, a quest for autonomy, under the term of “self-help”.
- **Knowledge co-production** is possibly more obviously community-driven since it is based on claims rather than responses to co-production from above or strategic collaborations to improve a given (urban) situation, often resulting from perceived injustices. Beyond improvement to given material situations, co-production in this approach is more obviously thought as a tool for democratic change or spatial justice (even if the terms are not necessarily used as such and that this analysis is not always clearly stated).

The case study of UrbaSen in Dakar

In Dakar, the UrbaSen NGO, former association of urban professionals is engaged in various co-produced projects with the Fédération Sénégalaise des Habitants, an umbrella organization who represents community groups of slum dwellers and inhabitants of precarious neighborhoods. All together, the expert NGO and the community based organization support local residents to define, finance and implement projects that the community itself has identified as an answer to their needs. The three approaches to community driven co-production can be recognize in their actions :

- Through a database and collective community finance system, which also benefits from international fundings, Urbasen and the FSH has enabled the construction of 77 semi-collective cesspools, the supply of 3 805 waste garbage cans and the development of 30 public spaces. This service co-production is here a response that the public authorities seemed unable to provide.
- That same collective finance system also enabled the rebuilt of 800 houses and construction of 47 residential toilets as a housing coproduction tool.
- Finally, in order to identify the need of each territorially based community, the UrbaSen NGO technically support any project of data collection and collective mapping, initially to protect residents and houses from flooding, taking his part to knowledge co-production approach.

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This community-based co-production is, yet, marked by some form of expertise hierarchies and culture : UrbaSen and FSH claiming to empower residents to acquire a “decision making” culture they supposedly lack. Finally, the recent partnership of UrbaSen with the flood planning administration to update map data challenge the idea of an authority-free coproduction on a long run.

Key debates around co-production

- *(Institutional) Co-production as part of a cycle of fashionable concepts*

“Coproduction” seems to be gradually replacing “participation” as a buzzword for development studies and as a global mantra for “good governance” (Cornwall 2008). It comes as a response to the failures, disappointments and criticisms of participatory democracy, stemming from civil society and academics alike.
“Participation”, especially after its appropriation in global institutions, development policies and local government reforms across the globe (North and South) would be criticized as “tokenism”, superficial and a tick-box exercise for public authorities in most of its occurrences. The interest in co-production (of urban services) has thus recently increased at international level, becoming somehow trendy. For example, the Article 117 of United Nations Policy Paper 9, Urban Services and Technology, prepared for the conference Habitat III, states that *“local governments should promote co-production of basic services with local communities, particularly in informal settlements and slums”* (UN, 2016: 22). Now mainstream, it is suspected to create a “participation fatigue” amongst participants (Cornwall 2008), not leading to any substantial nor substantive change in their lives nor in their access to urban basic services.
As opposed to “participation”, criticized as unsubstantial “talk shop”, the notion of “co-production”, both emphasizes the act of production of a material, concrete, physical object; and the reality of a partnership (co-), a form of horizontality allowed by the coming together of civil society and state joining forces in a bounded process in time and space (Bénit-Gbaffou 2018).

For many global actors but also several scholars, co-production increasingly appears to be a valuable alternative for delivering services capable of improving the efficiency of provision, while also contributing to citizens' empowerment and local governments' effectiveness. However, it is necessary to approach the study of service co-production with a critical attitude. Indeed, coproduction may also be subject to resource capture by elites, create conflicts among groups and service management or lead to environmental decay and urban fragmentation.

- *Did coproduction processes (institutional or community-driven) lead to a reduction of inequality and to growing democratic practices?*

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On first hand, institutional coproduction often reduces inequalities by expanding access to urban services, generally towards lower income social groups and areas. Yet, it has also been demonstrated that institutionalized coproduction sometimes underlies neoliberal instrumentalization and processes, where poorer communities provide their free labour to build or manage what "should be" public service and dilute democratic accountability by scattering political responsibility.

On a second hand, community-driven coproduction fosters social linkages and the legitimation or development of knowledge amongst marginalised communities. It is also supposed to increase individual and often community capacity to act, and hence a sense of citizenship. Yet, there is so far less clear evidence that these processes manage on their own to shift policy choices and gain strategic influence. When they do, it might be at the cost of losing some of their bottom-up, grassroots anchorage, by accepting degrees of institutionalisation.

- *Community and institutional coproduction processes: two phases in a cycle?*

Each of the two meanings of "coproduction" (institutional and community in short) entails different positions vis-à vis the state: institutional coproduction entails a predominantly collaborative approach with the state (not meaning devoid of tensions) as community coproduction tends to entail a predominantly antagonistic position towards the state (not meaning a lack of engagement). Yet, if considering antagonism and collaboration as a continuum of interaction between state and civil society - community organisations resort to both, and in the "landscape" of civil society organisations, there is a variety of modes of engagement with the state - on a longer time-span, community coproduction and institutional co-production prove to be more as two phases in a cycle than opposing systems.

This cycle echoes what had been theorised by Robert Michels (1959 : 408), theorizing social movements, as the 'cruel game' : reading it in terms of perpetual failure of social movements, being deradicalized or "domesticated" as they get institutionalised and as their policy ideas get incorporated into government and policy documents. Other readings could, however, see it as a partial victory, when social movements ideas and values become incorporated in the public organisation ("institutionalised") (see institutionalisation in this glossary) .

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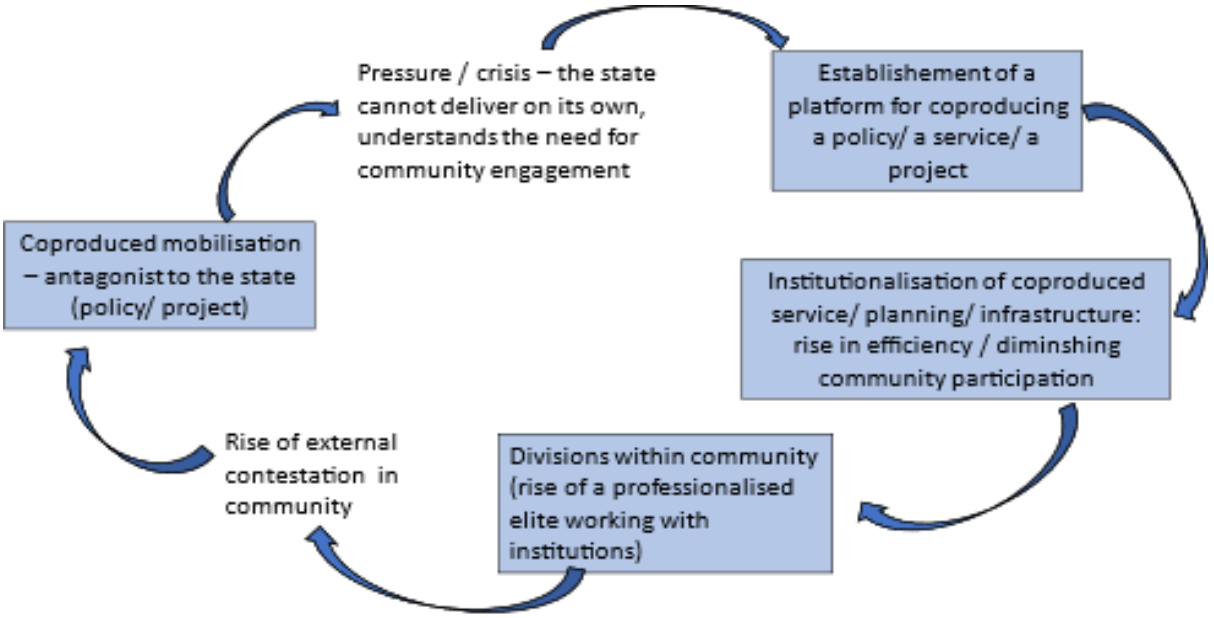

Source : Bénit-Gbaffou 2023

This debate parallels the conceptual distinction made by Miraftab (2009) and Cornwall (2008) between "invented" and "invited" spaces of participation: contrasting and opposing participation initiated by civil society (invented) or initiated by public authorities (invited). After long-standing and quite normative conceptual opposition between the two (seeing the former as radical and authentic whilst the second would be coopted and tokenistic), many researchers however acknowledge the complementary nature of the two spaces of participation.

In any case, there seems to be a clear research gap and interest in better understanding the implications of the shift of co-production from bottom-up citizen initiatives (social movement) towards collaborative approaches with institutions. This question also interrogates the role of intermediaries who can act as frontrunners, catalysts but also change the dynamics between state actors and citizens. More research could be done on their action as mediators, to unpack various configurations where the nature and the impact of these processes of intermediation on co-production processes may differ.

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Empowerment

by Maripaz Argundez & Anna Steigmann,
with Claire Bénit-Gbaffou & Agnès Deboulet

A presentation of what academic literature says on some aspects potentially relevant for FAIRVILLE

Genealogy of the term – how it was born, how it was used

The use of empowerment as a concept began with the social upheavals that took place in the 1960s. However, throughout time the term has been overused to such an extent that its meaning has increasingly grown vague. Furthermore, the concept has been politically claimed by progressive and conservative activists and politicians, highlighting its ambiguity (Rappaport, 1995; Perkins, 2010).

In 1976 Barbara Salomon (1976) used the term to title her research work, *Black Empowerment: Social Work in Oppressed Communities*, stressing the importance of empowerment to improve the conditions of marginalized communities. One year later (1977) Berger and Neuhaus published the American Enterprise monograph in which they mentioned the advantages of community service and argued for the decentralization of power. However, their work was funded by neo-conservatives and misused and misinterpreted to ensure that power remains at the most centralized levels of government and commerce (Perkins, 2010), demonstrating that the vagueness of the concept stemmed from the beginning. Psychologist Julian Rappaport, in 1981, advocated for an empowerment model that acknowledges the active role people should embrace in "designing and controlling their own help and destiny" (1981). In 1984, a volume published by Serrano Garcia (1984) included much of the current empowerment theory. To counteract the overuse and lack of definition of empowerment, Perkins (2010) proposes the term "collective efficacy" as a more carefully used name to study the process.

Defining the concept

According to the Cornell University Empowerment Group (1989), empowerment is "An intentional ongoing process centered in the local community, involving mutual respect, critical reflection, caring and group participation, through which people lacking an equal share of valued resources gain greater access to and control over those resources".

Perkins and Zimmerman (1995) provided their own definition, referring to empowerment as a "process by which people gain control over their lives, democratic participation in the life of their community and a critical understanding of their environment." As Perkins (2010) explained from both definitions what can be highlighted is that empowerment is:

- a process.
- occurs in communities and organizations.

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- requires active participation.
- involves access to and control over important decisions.

Relevant debates and useful conceptual distinctions

Marie Hélène Bacqué and Carole Biewener (2013) add that the concept of empowerment is distinct from others (such as participation, for instance), as "it articulates two dimensions: the idea of power (at the core of the term itself), and the learning process to grow, access or gain power".

Another useful conceptual distinction is usefully highlighted by Faranak Miraftab (2004), synthesizing the distinction between individual, inter-personal and collective forms of empowerment—showing how sometimes emphasis on individual empowerment masks forms of collective disempowerment (as part of the neoliberal vision of autonomous individuals responsible for their own fate). Thus, she warns analysts to consider each of the three forms of empowerment in their dynamics.

> "*The individual level*: how individuals perceive their interests, their sense of self-worth and self-confidence, their personal potency and ability to reflect on the options perceived as either within or outside their available choices.
>
> *The inter-personal level* concerns mostly individuals' power to draw on a range of resources, including the economic resources, skills, information, and social capital to assert their interest vis-a-vis others in decision making when there is observable conflict."
>
> At *the collective level*, it is about challenging the institutional and the structural dimensions of power, including social forces and institutional practices that keep potential issues out of politics or decision making "

Marie Hélène Bacqué and Carole Bievener (2013) call these three dimensions ¨individual, collective and political" forms of empowerment—the latter meaning the capacity of (empowered) groups, or communities, to transform unequal (political or social) power structures. The collective level can be partly linked to Miraftab's definition of the inter-personal level but can also refer to small group dynamics.

In the same vein, to avoid confusing the feeling of empowerment with the actual power, Perkins (2010) highlights that rather than studying how people feel empowered, the focus should be on how to use empowerment strategies to gain actual power to improve a community (ibid.). To some extent, the study of empowerment opens to the study of the actual outcomes of political processes, interrogating whether they have led or not to actual changes in the well-being, recognition, and social position of a community.

The term empowerment also stems from development studies and has been widely used by donor's agencies. As noted by Perry et al. (2024), "*the emphasis by international and national research policy and funding organisations on co-production as a strategy for 'empowerment' and 'capacity-building'– terms which reinforce a deficit model of local expertise and a paternalistic narrative of 'helping the South,' rather than focussing on the amplification of existing capacities and*

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mobilisation of existing agency and power". This paternalistic use of empowerment is specifically crucial in most of the deprivation areas in Europe and in the US where migrant women, in particular, and poor or segregated groups are often thought of as being saved by participatory schemes working hard to "empower" them, regardless of the community self-representation on power relations.

Case study - Empowerment in the Rathausblock, Berlin

In the case of the Rathausblock, the neighbors' initiatives, associated with the grassroots associations began the collective process with the shared goal of improving the community's lives by hindering the privatization of the land and ensuring its use and accessibility to all neighbors. Despite the strength of the real estate market, which materialized in the form of two bidding offers in 2012 and 2014, the joint effort of the community managed to stop the privatization and financial exploitation of the land. The committed "empowerment" of the neighbors community was so determined that it not only halted the plot's privatization but also influenced the decision of the Berlin state.

Scholarship on empowerment agrees that it is a multilevel process, and according to Perkins (2010), it operates at multiple levels—individuals, groups, and organizations/whole communities. In the case of the Rathausblock, the empowerment process began at an individual level, with neighbors sharing a common goal. It evolved into an organizational level in which there was collective decision-making and reached the community level, represented by coalitions that promote access to resources. By 2014, the Rathausblock had already achieved the community level, which provided the formed coalitions with a higher political impact. As it happened, the Berlin State as well as Berlin's finance senator, got directly involved in the process, who fought for the public preservation of the land. Although it required some time, in 2019, the property was transferred from the Federal Government to the state of Berlin. Currently, the property belongs to the special fund *Daseinsvorsorge* of the state of Berlin.

Thus, by tracing the definition of empowerment, the evolution of the Rathausblock project is unpacked. By forming coalitions, the individually engaged local neighbor of Kreuzberg accessed power, reaching a governmental level that managed to improve the community living conditions. As the coalitions at Rathausblock demonstrate by embracing a grassroots-participatory approach, collaborating, involving and engaging their membership, they become powerful tools for leading change. However, disputes arose among the coalitions, and the only way to maintain a high level of engagement was to define clear goals under which the participants were united, for once the coalitions have reached the governmental level attention, citizens' participation is highly required to demonstrate their interest in the project and steer the decision-making process, highlighting the need for a long-term engagement.

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Throughout the empowerment process, to coordinate the collaboration of the participants, the matrix of coalitions, organizations, and events involved in the process has grown increasingly complex. To represent all the initiatives and traders in the Rathausblock, the *Vernetzungstreffen Rathausblock* (VTR) was formed in 2018 as a self-organization. Also, the *Forum Rathausblock* was constituted as an open meeting to any interested public. Yet, nowadays, the Forum's monthly meeting finds very little participation from the citizens. Together with the Friedrichshain-Kreuzberg district, the *Senatsverwaltung für Stadtentwicklung und Wohnen*, and the Berliner Immobilien management, they founded the board of the KOOP 6. The six cooperating members come together in the cooperative development of the block through the drafting and signing of a document, the "*Kooperationsvereinbarung*." Beyond stating the joint mission, the document structures future cooperation and establishes a binding timetable for the overall process.

Parallelly, the six partners previously mentioned constitute the *Zukunftsrat*, which represents the most significant decision-making and management body. In the *Zukunftsrat,* the Berlin state or the Senate administration for development and housing (*Senatsverwaltug für Entwicklung und Wohnen*) finds equal representation as the initiatives' coalitions and neighbors' communities (VTR). Furthermore, other groups were formed. The *Vorbereitungsgrupper Zukunftsrat deren Zusammensetzung*, which operates at a working level, prepare the *Zukunftsrat*'s meetings. The *Raum und Flächenkuratorium*, composed of civil society and institutional representatives, is encharged of the program and allocation of spaces. The *ZusammenStelle* support the involved initiatives in the elaboration and development of the Modell project and its implementation in the cooperation.

As narrated, the intricate maze of names and coalitions functions to renovate again and again the commitment and engagement of the participants, as well as to preserve their fair representation. However, as the decreasing citizen's participation in the Forum's meetings demonstrates, we question whether this organizational complexity dissuades citizens from participating. In the construction of the city, the development of such a large-scale project - especially, if it involves public participation, as does the Rathausblock - requires time, therefore, a long-term commitment. Considering this, the key point will be to investigate how to maintain that engagement level that enables the continuation of empowerment even once the goal has partially been achieved. Although in the Rathausblock the empowerment of the citizens has been fruitful, as it essentially redirected the State's decision, the project is still under construction, and the end is nowhere near. Therefore, and to conclude, we ask: Is empowerment a limited process? Is it only successful with short-term goals? If it is not, how can the initiatives keep the citizens' involvement ongoing despite the intricate maze of coalitions?

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Environmental Justice

by Grégory Busquet,
with Claire Bénit-Gbaffou & Giorgos Velegrakis

A presentation of what academic literature says on some aspects potentially relevant for FAIRVILLE

Defining Environmental Justice

As derived mainly from the fields of Political Ecology and Geography, environmental justice is the right to protection from environmental hazards pollutions, and the right to access its resources, no matter one's social condition (this second dimension being close to a part of what is referred to as the 'right to the city').

Schlosberg (2007) has sought to articulate a conception of environmental justice that incorporates:
a) distributive dimensions by focusing primarily on equitable distribution of environmental burdens and benefits);
b) procedural dimensions by highlighting the importance of involving affected communities in decision-making processes;
c) dimensions of recognition, taking two forms : cultural recognition and political recognition[1];
d) capabilities dimensions, particularly focusing on issues related to democracy, participation and power in the context of environmental decision-making.

- **'The environment', in *environmental* justice or injustice**
  is defined in two ways, depending on context. It is often defined in a narrow sense : the ecological systems in which we live, at various scales. But also (as was the case when it emerged), in the broad sense of what surrounds us at various scales and affects our lives – including the built and social environment) (in French, "cadre de vie") (Busquet, 2014).
- **Environmental *injustice* is linked but differs from environmental *inequality*.**
  Environmental inequalities can be measured, in their cumulative and intersectional dimensions, in their historical evolution and spatial patterns (Deldrève 2020).
  In contrast, the concept of environmental injustice remains elusive, being eminently subjective (Gervais-Lambony et al 2014). Even when used by lawyers and legal studies specialists, in the context of lawsuits, the concept of "justice" remains dependant on historical and local social norms: is "just" what a given justice system proclaims to be just in

[1] Cultural recognition pertains to the affirmation of identity and difference within society, encompassing issues of representation, respect, and dignity. Political recognition involves the acknowledgment of individuals as equal and capable of participating fully in political and social life, including having their interests recognized and addressed in the public sphere.

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a given society[2]. The concept of environmental injustice seems to be more useful when related to a process of social mobilisation. Similarly, the concept of environmental justice relates to the making of collective claims, demanding redress. By extension, it could apply to environmental public policies attempting to redress existing social inequalities.

Illustrating practically the different questions asked by approaches in terms of "environmental inequality" and of "environmental injustice"

Various coalitions of countries of the global South, which do not contribute much to global warming and are both more vulnerable to, and more affected by, global change (set of multi-scalar *environmental inequalities*), make claims for *environmental justice* in different ways, shifting in time:

- right to development, industrialisation and pollution;
- claim for an international green fund as assistance to have more ecologically virtuous forms of development;
- claim or financial assistance to fix damages affecting local environments and linked to global warming.
- claim for 'redress' as many countries as post-colonial societies have been plundered from their mineral resources and had their ecosystems damaged.

The concept of environmental justice/ injustice allows for understanding the politics of claim-making (defining what could be considered "just"), socially constructed and taking multiple and shifting forms depending on political opportunities. The concept of environmental inequalities aims at defining criteria against which inequality can be measured and mapped.

Genealogy

The concept of environmental justice has a complex genealogy, and its definitions and uses vary depending on whether it is viewed from the perspective of social movements, public policy or research.

The concept of 'environmental justice', emerged in North American cities in the 1970s and 1980s, in the wake of the civil right movement, to denounce the spatial overlap between forms of racial discrimination, industrial and urban pollution and vulnerability to natural hazards. There, environmental justice research was mainly quantitative and has focused almost exclusively on the impacts of environmental conditions on human health (Holifield, 2015)

> " 'Environmental racism', the term used in the earliest literature in the field (e.g., Chavis 1987), describes the disproportionate effects of environmental pollution on racial minorities. Because it describes the disproportionate relationship between high levels of pollution exposure for people of color and the low level of environmental benefits they enjoy, **environmental racism** can be defined as

[2] And even that can be contested when its decisions are not seen as socially legitimate.

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> **the unequal distribution of environmental benefits and pollution burdens based on race.** 'Environmental inequality' has emerged more recently to encompass both additional factors that are associated with disproportionate environmental impacts such as **class, gender, immigration status, as well as the inter-connections between these factors**. '**Environmental justice' is the name of the social movement that emerged in response to these particular problems**." (Sze and London, 2008, pp. 1332–1333)

In the same vein, authors define environmental justice and injustice as follows:

> "Environmental justice is about the right to remain in one's place and environment and be protected from uncontrolled investment and growth, pollution, land grabbing, speculation, disinvestment, and decay and abandonment." (Anguelovski, 2014, p. 33)

From the 1980s and 1990s, the term was used simultaneously to mobilise against environmental management policies and land-use planning policies, and **the blindness of the environmental movement to the racial, and then class, logics that structure exposure to risks and nuisances**. The concept was then used mainly by sociologists seeking to determine the relative importance of discrimination factors - race, class and gender - in the production of 'environmental inequalities', using mainly quantitative methods (Sze and London, 2008).

In the 2000s, the concept was linked to that of the **'right to the city',** thanks to the rise of the alter-globalization movement, the rapprochement between movements from the North and South, and the appropriation of the concept by radical geographers. Research has explored the links between the formation of lifelong inequalities and the production/ reproduction/ destruction of the urban environment, as well as the forms of 'subaltern' resistance to the effects of these inequalities in different contexts (referred to as 'environmentalism of the poor') (Nixon, 2013).

This globalisation of fields and uses of the concept, whether in research, struggles or public policy, is reflected in the contemporary convergence of the concept with that of climate justice, which is being promoted by many activists at environmental summits and increasingly explored by research (Laigle, 2019). According to Anguelovski (2013) the Environmental Justice agenda has recently expanded its focus and breadth, and encompasses the right to well-connected, affordable, and clean transit systems in cities ; the right to healthy and affordable food and to community food security ; the right to green, affordable healthy housing along with recycling practices and spaces for gardens inside housing complexes ; the provision of economic opportunities for disenfranchised communities around the green economy ; and more recently connections between social equity and wealth creation to sustainability and climate mitigation (Kalka et al., 2024).

Emerging perspectives

- *The right to the city and environmental justice : a natural couple ?*

The spatial dimension of justice, at the heart of Lefebvre's work on the right to the city (1967), remains relatively unexplored by proponents of an intersectional approach to environmental inequalities, just as right to the city researchers sometimes struggle to account for the diversity and historical depth of the power relations structuring environmental inequalities within activist groups.

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Generally speaking, while the correlations between social status, location, exposure to risk and access to environmental amenities and resources are well documented, the question of the causal mechanisms of these correlations remains little explored (Sze and London, 2008), leaving open the question of the theoretical framework(s) suited to their interpretation.

- *Scales, cumulative effects and global environmental patterns in the Anthropocene*

Phenomenon such as social and urban segregation, urban sprawl, water, air and landscape quality are linked to the practices and choices of individuals and households, as much as to public policies (we are dealing with a multiplicity of factors) and are based on more general patterns, albeit historically and geographically situated, by which societies produce intrinsically vulnerable landscapes, and even affect the functioning of the Earth system. Current research therefore focuses on the question of the scales at which environmental justice is understood and claimed. Still seldom addressed by urban studies, the question of the Anthropocene and the way in which it raises questions of scale and social justice appears to be at the heart of future debates on the notion of environmental justice (Jon, 2021).

- *Keeping situated in a transversal and interdisciplinary world*

Other research focuses on the political stakes of these issues. Interrogating « environmental (in)justice » brings back the issue of social inequality at the heart of sustainability, and helps focusing on the articulation between (bottom up) mobilisations and (top down) policies towards sustainable cities (Blanchon et al 2009). What is more, this issue of cross-disciplinarity is not confined to public players nor social movements, but also concerns scientists, who are encouraged to work with disciplines that are far removed from each other. How can we ensure that this necessary trans-disciplinary approach does not result in a limp consensus that reproduces the status quo, but is instead rooted in questions of social and political justice (Asayama et al., 2019)? How can we basically maintain the demand for 'positionality' acquired by environmental justice studies (Pulido and Peña, 1998) while collaborating with other disciplines and sectors that do not share the same culture or the same understanding of the environment as a political object?

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Epistemic Justice

by Agnès Deboulet & Barbara Lipietz

Academic literature on epistemic (in)justice: brief insights relative to coproduction for just cities

Preamble - Epistemic (in)justice and Fairville objectives

Epistemic justice figures as one of the main entry points in the Fairville project, specifically as a methodology for engaging with inequalities and democratic deficit in cities, via the related lens of knowledge co-production. Indeed, Fairville aims to:

- "Provide a new set of evidence and indicators regarding spatial and epistemic (in)justice by filling an existing gap which, in turn, is impeding European institutions to better understand how urban co-production processes dedicated to spatial and epistemic justice can mitigate inequalities and positively impact on democracy, participation…
- Demonstrate the efficiency of university-community co-production partnerships as a way to address epistemic inequalities;
- Allow an epistemic justice orientation in the various actions undertaken in the project" (Fairville horizon Call, 2022)

The relevance of epistemic justice to the Fairville project stems from its provocative and generative challenge to established notions of knowledge, knowledge production and the use of knowledge in practice (and in urban development specifically). Epistemic justice challenges the notion of knowledge as neutral and objective, and brings to the fore the question of power, both in knowledge production and with regards the legitimacy of knowledge positions.

Epistemic (in)justice is an encompassing theme, elaborated in the context of philosophical reflections on knowledge and epistemologies, and taken up in a number of social sciences fields, including in gender and post-colonial studies. In the context of urban planning, where knowledge plays a critical legitimising device and acts as rationale for action, epistemic (in)justice raises issues of inequality in the recognition, or the perceived legitimacy, of "ordinary" or "tacit" knowledge - usually held by inhabitants - on the one hand, versus "professional" or "expert" knowledge on the other. Within this contested field, the role of academic/scientific knowledge warrants closer observation, especially when invoked in knowledge co-production for more equitable and democratic cities.

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Epistemic justice and the feminist and postcolonial/decolonial turn

Epistemic justice builds on a recognition that knowledge as socially constructed is heterogeneous, that there are multiple ways in which the world can be apprehended, multiple ways of 'knowing'. Relatedly is an appreciation of the diversity of knowledge holders and their diverse contribution to knowledge. Epistemic injustice stems from a recognition that knowledge holders - and their situated knowledge of the world - are embedded in unequal power relations, that tend to either uphold or undermine their value/their legitimacy in public discourse and representations. This seminal contribution of epistemic (in)justice to the field of knowledge has been invigorated by feminist, postcolonial and decolonial studies (Fricker, 2007, Godrie, Dos Santos, 2017) which have highlighted the manyfold inequalities and power relations that structure the fields of knowledge and especially Western science. Feminist studies in particular have highlighted two types of epistemic injustices (Fricker, 2007):

- Hermeneutical injustices, which consist in failing to have conceptual or interpretative resources available to express a lived experience (example of harassment)
- Testimonial injustice, i.e. not being heard/not being seen as legitimate as "knowing", because of a marginal position within social relations (example of black Americans' testimony in the context of US jury trials)

Postcolonial and decolonial studies have shed light onto the fundamental epistemological imperialism at the heart of Western science, whereby the production of scientific truth is presented as superior to that resulting from other forms of knowledge production, especially that of colonised societies and peoples (Santos, 2014, Shiva, 2008). Conversely, post- and de-colonial studies have brought attention to the political "production of ignorance" as a means of maintaining some categories of population on the margins of knowledge, fostering a sense of non-legitimacy and inferiority (Proctor, Schiebinger, 2008).

Effectively, feminist and post/de-colonial contributions have set out a challenge for the field of knowledge and knowledge production: in a context marked by profound structural inequalities, how can we rehabilitate or rebuild forms of knowledge production that are emancipatory (Santos, 2011)? The question has profound echoes with Paulo Freire's (1970) injunction towards an emancipatory conception of learning - or learning as transformation.

Key Questions for Fairville

Debates on epistemic justice raise important methodological issues for the Fairville programme, including:

How can (transformative) research effectively move away from an expert-led understanding of knowledge production on the urban, towards genuinely integrating the notion of "an ecology of knowledges" (Santos) as the basis for research? Related to this, what processes/mechanisms are

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required for recognising and valuing forms of knowledge produced outside scientific protocols and by non-scientific actors? What are concrete steps for moving away from knowledge production as domination that recognise, and make room for, a diversity of knowledge production and knowledge products?

Included in these questions is a recognition of the barriers to knowledge co-production. How can we envisage the production of knowledge as emancipatory process, for those diverse individuals involved in the process of knowledge production, and as a social/collective emancipatory project? Moreover, how can such a conception of urban knowledge production/epistemic justice be integrated into policy making and practice? i.e. how can we ensure that epistemic justice is recognised, practised and scaled - a routine component of policy and practice for the just and democratic city?

The above questions relate both to the mechanisms of research within the Fairville programme (e.g. integrating non-research actors into Fairville's agenda setting, protocols, monitoring results, etc.) - and to broader debates regarding the role of knowledge co-production for more equitable and democratic cities.

Taking epistemic justice seriously in participatory processes

To help address some of the above questions and in particular the consideration of epistemic (in)justice in open forms of participatory processes, we can call upon the work of sociologists and anthropologists on the one hand, and urban planning theorists/practitioners on the other. Here we should pay attention to differentiate the works on citizen's knowledge (Deboulet and Nez, 2013) whereby residents' knowledge is often restricted to the proximity and the near-by locality ("savoirs d'usage"), neglecting their faculty to raise broader political or substantive critical concerns.

Espousing the centrality of epistemic injustice, many sociologists and anthropologists have developed reflexions on forms of citizens' legitimacy based on "ordinary" knowledge: some specify the importance of experiential knowledge used by people exposed to epistemic injustice (Baillergeau & Duyvendak, 2016). As explained by Juan (2021), participatory research is "both questioning the inequalities entrenched in science production and is engaged in the mobilizations for recognition and reinforcement of the agentivity of oppressed groups (...)

Several conditions are therefore proposed to enable such processes to happen, including long research temporalities in order to facilitate access to and counter official expertise. Juan (ibid) further highlights the role of autonomous collective knowledge ("savoirs collectifs autonomes") developed via work amongst peers ("travailler en groupes de pairs"). She quotes examples such as "photolangage" where people in situations of poverty engage in every step of the research process, from question definition to write-up. Data collection is also a key component of the knowledge co-production framework.

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Example from the PICRI action-research

In the large peripheral city of Vitry-sur-seine (in the Ile de France region), a joint calendar of meetings has been undertaken by a research group with 10 voluntary people living in one of the many social housing districts, with a tenant association (2010-2011). A thematic meeting was organised each month without the local authorities, although they were associated with the elaboration of the programme at the outset. Then a very graphic and synthetic restitution was sent but also printed and materially distributed to all participants in order to prepare for the next one. The goal of these actions was to explore the problems of the neighborhoods and their potentials with the ambition of letting the voice of residents, unheard, consolidate and gain strength.

A documentary film was then elaborated and shown to the adjunct mayor (city planning) and the staff (https://www.senscritique.com/film/Apprendre_a_travailler_ensemble/38899825/videos). During the discussion, one of the participants explained that it took her six months to really believe that the team was present without hidden interest as she believed that she (and the community) had nothing to say that could be of interest to the researchers. The film and the sessions in small format allowed to gain trust in the team and external actors, for the first time since she became chairperson of the tenants' association. What she mostly appreciated was from "the respect of the given word", namely the fact that their words were heard and not betrayed as it had never been the case during the long years in contact and negotiation with the public authorities.

In the field of planning, a number of authors (and practitioners) have focused on mechanisms to enable the voicing of multiple knowledges , and ensuring mutual respect and understanding - in contexts of participatory decision-making fora (see in particular the work of John Forester, 1989; Healey, 1997; Innes, 1995). Based on what have been called "interpretative' and "communicative" principles, these mechanisms are an attempt to engage with and address power imbalances in participatory spaces. Reflecting on how power influences who gets to come to the decision-making table, and crucially, who gets heard, these mechanisms seek to expand such spaces through purposeful process design and facilitation. This entails paying attention to the location and the timing of participatory processes : is the location accessible to a wide variety of actors? Are these considered 'safe spaces' for those usually excluded from participatory fora? Does the timing of meetings include consideration of caring activities, work rythms, etc.? Another area of focus centres around ensuring equal access to available knowledge resources /material to all participants and thinking through the language of interaction: is it understandable for all, can jargon be removed or explained? is there a need for translation of different kinds? Other considerations pertain to the power differentials regarding confidence in public speaking (within communities, and between communities and decision-makers, experts, etc.) and strategies to bolster such confidence (initial separate meetings, training, etc.). Attention is also given to mechanisms that can support – give

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credibility or social meaning to – different knowledges. In this revised planning approach, the planner is no longer seen as the protagonist, the all-knowing 'expert', but rather (in ways that can also be questioned), takes on the role of the translator, the facilitator of transformatory, deep, participation-as-debate processes.

Some of the above approaches have come under criticism. Not so much in terms of attempts to make participatory fora more equitable – indeed, some of the lessons of the communicative/ deliberative turn have become staples of participatory processes within marginalised epistemic communities. More fundamentally, the above approaches have been challenged for their over-optimistic readings of the capacity to change within state-led processes, or indeed the transformative power of attempts to rebalance the participatory playing field within planning. Instead radical (Sandercock, 1998) and insurgent (Miraftab, 2009) planning approaches have emphasised the need for community centring in the knowledge development process, and for control by communities of their own knowledge and knowledge products. Many have adopted a healthy skepticism with regards attempts at coproduction. Here, there are clear overlaps with discussions detailed in the note on bottom-up co-production processes.

Others have engaged with the deliberative /communicative response to epistemic (in)justice by further exploring the mechanisms for adjudicating between various "knowledge claims", made by diverse knowledge holders, in contexts of planning decisions (Rydin, 2007). In these responses, the focus has been on mechanisms to not only recognise and value diverse forms of expertise, but also recognise their diverse uses, for different purposes, at different times, and in different contexts (Bénit-Gbaffou & Williams 2023), including in the context of community-academic engagement. Alongside discussions on means of developing emancipatory knowledge co-production practices, these reflections encourage an exploration of nuanced strategies for epistemic justice in the coproduction of just cities, based on careful reworkings of the meanings of expertise, as well as nuanced and situated understandings of power. As will be further explored in the Fairville project, this involves paying more attention to the critical role of facilitation.

Some emerging lessons for epistemic justice approaches in planning/in Fairville

In the wake of the above discussions in the fields of urban studies, sociology and planning, we propose a few principles for taking epistemic justice seriously. These principles are a starting point and will evolve with accumulated learnings from the Fairville programme.

- Challenging the role of the planner as a singular expert (Sandercock, 1998) is the starting point of transformative practices (for addressing urban inequalities and democratic deficit). Recognising the ecology of different types of knowledge on any given urban development issue is a pre-requisite; so is the recognition of these diverse forms of knowledge through mutual respect (or 'as peers').
- Epistemic justice in planning challenges established hierarchisation of different forms of knowledge. Such hierarchies are often upheld through technicist and jargonist language.

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Good practices require an acknowledgement that diverse forms of knowledge are likely to require translation to be apprehended/understood by all.

- Similarly, restricted access to technical documentation or lack of transparency regarding decision-makers's agendas reinforce power imbalances in the knowledge field and is one of the major impediments to epistemic justice in planning practice. Taking epistemic justice seriously entails shifts towards more open planning procedures.
- Epistemic justice requires support and staff development within local authorities and urban development/planning agencies to cultivate an appreciation and recognition of its centrality for more equal and democratic cities.
- Epistemic justice also calls for support to urban dwellers. In particular epistemic justice recognises the unequal position of diverse power holders and the unequal conditions under which they are able to articulate their situated knowledge to a wider audience. Taking epistemic justice seriously thus requires acknowledging the resourcing required to buttress the elaboration of so called 'tacit' or 'ordinary' knowledge: time resources, financial resources, space – are all much scarcer amongst non-organised and voluntary communities than they are amongst professionals.
- Finally, for epistemic justice to lead to actionable collective knowledge, investment in deliberative facilitation is key.

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Inequality & social/spatial injustice

by Philippe Urvoy & Alfonso Alfonsi

Academic literature on inequality and social and spatial (in)justice: brief insights relative to FAIRVILLE

Inequalities : initial definitions

The notion of inequality can be associated with a series of definitions, depending on the perception of the different social groups and individuals, or according to the conceptions of the different sciences. From the **point of view of economists**, social inequalities are above all the result of the **accumulation of capital by certain social groups** (on a societal scale) or by certain nations (on a global scale) **to the detriment of others**. While this strictly economic approach can be measured using quantitative and statistical data, such materials are not sufficient for a detailed analysis of "the socio-economic mechanisms that produce inequality" (Piketty, 2008). Within this socio-economic approach to the question, the Marxist current had a strong influence in affirming the systemic nature of inequalities in capitalist society, based on a monetary economy of production and accumulation. According to Marx, the division of labor, in such society, produces differentiation through mutilating specialization of skills, thus producing an unequal class society, divided between groups owning the means of production (the bourgeoisie) and those confined to the role of force of production (the working class). The most important work these recent years underlines the fact that, in our contemporary societies, capitalism generates ever greater income inequalities, in contradiction with the principles of equality and solidarity advocated in democratic societies (Piketty, 2013). If the 20th century was marked by a globalization of inequalities, with growing differentiations between the countries of the North and the global South, some authors assert that this growing differentiation now manifests itself mainly within the populations of the same country, even in the so-called developed countries (Bourguignon, 2012).

Beyond the strictly economic definition, the **sociological approach to inequality** insists on the **multidimensional and systemic nature of inequality** (Galland & Lemel, 2018), involving – beyond economic features – also cultural (Bourdieu, 1979 ; Rosça, 2019), historical and social factors that differentiate groups and individuals. Inequality should thus be understood as **unequal access to elements that have 'value' in a given society** (whether material or symbolic goods such as wealth, health conditions, level of education, cultural background socially recognised as legitimate, etc.). This means that inequalities are not just linked to belonging to a particular social class (being rich or poor, middle or upper class, etc.) but also to cultural, gender, socio-ethnic or religious membership or backgrounds. As feminist and intersectional studies have pointed out, several factors of inequality can add up in a person's life (Yuval-Davis, 2015) (i.e. a young non-white

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working class woman, in a capitalist post-colonial society marked by racism and sexism is exposed to different layers of inequalities that are not just economic, but linked to cultural, historical, sociological factors and others).

How data sources define and measure inequalities

46 data sources on various kinds of inequalities in Europe and beyond were analyzed within the framework of Fairville (WP1). Some interpretations of the data on inequalities identified in the sources concern:

- *The complexity of the phenomena of inequality*

Some approaches view inequality as a complex, multifaceted phenomenon that needs to be analysed by considering different areas of human well-being (not just the economic ones) and different types of data sources.

- *The multiple impacts of inequality on people and human groups*

Inequality is the result of large concomitant economic, social and environmental dynamics that impact different population groups in many different ways. Factors such as Covid-19 have further worsened the inequalities of many vulnerable groups.

- *The relationship between inequality and opportunities*

Major progress in fulfilling basic needs has only partially moderated inequalities among some population groups. Evidence suggests that gaps in more advanced accomplishments persist or are widening.

- *Some considerations and directions regarding strategies and policies about inequality*

Strategies and policies to address inequalities are different from those to address other problems. In this area, factors such as redistribution of income and wealth are important, but also trust, education, human capital, quality of political institutions, availability of reliable data.
Most of the interpretations reported in the sources reviewed concern aspects of inequality, such as:

- The economic inequality (in particular, the new rise of economic inequality and inequalities in labour market)
- Territorial and spatial dynamics and inequality (in the urban and the regional contexts)
- Gender inequalities
- Disability and inequality
- Environment, climate change and inequality
- Technology and inequality (with particular reference to ICT impacts)

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- Health inequalities
- Migration and inequality.

(Source: K&I "Report on document analysis", Fairville D1.1, 2023)

It is important to note that it is not the difference per se between individuals that causes social inequality, but the **deprivation** that it engenders for certain categories of individuals (Duvoux, 2021), a deprivation that can take different forms: a denied access to decent housing, to healthy food or environment, to certain professional spheres, and so on. Social inequalities can thus be associated with the **notion of social injustice, in the sense that they lead to a deprivation of fundamental rights for certain citizens**.

Socio-spatial inequalities and spatial justice

The inequalities that run through our society are reflected in the way territories are organized and constructed. Space is shaped by relations of power, where mechanisms of differentiation manifest themselves, both reflecting inequalities and resulting in dynamics of **imposed or voluntary separation between certain groups**, generally described by the term **"segregation"** (Lehman-Frisch 2009).

These temporary or permanent differentiation mechanisms can be observed in dynamics of voluntary concentration and isolation of economic elites, such as gated communities, but also through the relegation of the poorest populations to specific urban areas. Depending on the cities and regions of the world concerned, these areas can take a wide variety of forms. They sometimes reflect a lack of State responsibility towards the right to decent housing, compensated by self-construction processes developed by residents, especially in the global South big cities but also more and more in Europe. Such spaces can also be the result of a differentiation, produced by the State, through urban programmes aiming at promoting public housing for the working class, as in most European countries. Such programmes**, most of which initially aim at reducing deprivation in terms of housing, sometimes contribute to reinforcing spatial inequalities** by creating separate urban "categories" (Ratouis, 2011), characterised by identifiable management methods and urban forms (i.e. HLM and Quartiers Prioritaires in France, Public Housing Projects in the US, Million homes districts in Sweden).

Regardless of their nature, most of these urban spaces, whether they are built with or without state participation, are often marked by a lack of quality in terms of infrastructure or urban services, in addition with significant social **stigmatisation**, reinforced by political and media discourse. The perception of living in a "stigmatised area" (Backvall, 2019) is often expressed by residents of such territories through situations of **discrimination** suffered in their daily life (in educational and professional environment especially). Spatial inequality is then associated with **epistemic injustice and "communicational inequality"** (Godrie et. al., 2021) (see the note on *epistemic justice*), as the

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discourse, the knowledge, the opinions or the skills of the citizens coming from these areas are often disregarded by employers, media or policy makers. This aspect has been observed in several recent works on the urban renewal processes of such areas, in which the opinions of local communities are often not seriously taken into account, even when the law requires co-construction of the urban project with residents.

The urban, social and cultural differentiation of such areas is associated with specific terms used to designate them, depending on each region and language : often exogenous terms, sometimes invented or appropriated by some of their dwellers (low income areas, ghettos, barrios, villas, blocks, quartiers populaires, cités, slums, favelas etc.). The specific geographic position of low-income areas in comparison to wealthy areas also reflect a process of “opportunity hoarding” (Tilly, 1998) applied to urban territory, while the most valuable lands are appropriated by the privileged social groups. This social value of urban lands can be determined by their location (close to the inner city, or to specific activities or leisure areas) or by the quality of their environment. In that regard, several recent works demonstrated the connection between social and environmental inequality: low-income areas are often more exposed to environmental risks (such as floods, air pollution etc.) – in particular as they are generally built on cheaper, less valued land. As highlighted in the report on inequality carried out by the K&I office for the Fairville project (2023), understanding the relationships between social, spatial and environmental inequalities is a key question in the context of global climate change. This aspect is linked to the fact that inequalities in the face of environmental risks manifest themselves both on a local and global scale, marking a clear distinction between the countries of the North and the global South (as highlighted in the map reproduced below), but also by the fact that the measures taken by the authorities to mitigate climate change can impact negatively on the lower income and more vulnerable groups. We should also underline that urban competition at a global scale has also reinforced inequalities among cities and metropolis and inside cities, especially since the mid 90’s (Deboulet, 2012).

It is important here to remember that the systemic aspect of spatial inequality (directly related to social, racial, gender, healthcare inequality and environmental injustice), before having been analysed closely by social sciences, has been initially highlighted and publicly demonstrated by the mobilisations and efforts of community-based coalitions emerging from low-income areas from the 1960s and 1970s, such as the Environmental Justice Movement in the United States, among other groups in other cities of the world at this time (see the notice on *environmental justice*). Several other citizen based initiatives contributed in recent years to provide new elements in order to update this interpretation, identifying and tackling the plural dimensions of social inequalities on a local scale (Just Space, 2018 ; Observatoire des Inégalités, 2023). Some of these local initiatives have notably worked in order to co-produce knowledge on the multidimensional aspects of inequalities, taking into account the perceptions of those who experience them on a daily basis. Such recent studies, carried for example in relation to the impacts of the Covid 19 pandemic on specific social groups, have contributed to highlighting little-studied dimensions of inequalities associating access to care, information, digital tools and the precariousness of work in urban areas (The Ubele initiative, 2020).

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In order to grasp these multiple effects of socio-spatial inequalities, some authors use the terms of **spatial (in)justice** (Soja, 2009), in order to underline the specific deprivation produced by the economic and political organisation of space in our society. As remembered by Soja, these effects can include : "the redlining of urban investments (...) institutionalised residential segregation (...) colonial and/or military geographies of social control" but also "the creation of other core-periphery spatial structures of privilege from the local to the global scales". Nevertheless, it would be difficult to qualify all urban inequalities as spatial injustices since they are not necessarily perceived as such neither differentiated by striking differences in policies.

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Institutionalisation & institutional activism

by Claire Bénit-Gbaffou
with Agnès Deboulet & Mathilde Jourdam-Boutin

A presentation of what academic literature says on some aspects potentially relevant for FAIRVILLE

Narrow and broad understandings of institutionalisation

The term "institution" has both a narrow and a broad understanding.
The common understanding of "institution" refers to a public or a government organisation: a specific type of organisation since unlike private organisations, it is driven by the dual mandate of efficiency (in service delivery) and democracy (representativity and accountability). In this perspective, institutionalisation refers to the movement of "entering" a (public / government) institution, by movements or causes initially considered external to it. For instance, one speaks of a form of institutionalisation when social movement activists are elected as local councillors in a city, become part of a participatory structure where government officials and movement activists regularly debate (or jointly define) a policy or a course of action, or even more broadly adopt cooperative approaches with public institutions to (re)define a project, a policy, a course of action.
A second, related but broader meaning of "institution" defines it as a set of rules and norms, formal and informal, that are relatively stable, often tacitly known, widely shared or dominant in a given society, and that regulate social interactions (for instance mariage, the family, the church). These rules and norms, although socially constructed and essentially contextual, are often "naturalised" and part of "common sense" in a given society. Institutionalisation of an idea or a cause will then refer to the movement through which an idea or a cause (for instance feminism, environmental awareness, tolerance for or celebration of diversity) becomes the dominant norm, almost tacitly, in a society. Based on this understanding of institution as set of stable rules and norms, the word institutionalisation can also refers to the evolution of a movement or collective into a structured organization endowed with legal status giving access to rights (such as funding or representation), bureaucratic tools and process (member registration and fees, internal status, rules of procedures) and the stabilization of objects, norms and operations.

Institutionalisation of a social movement: external and internal

Much of the academic literature on "institutionalisation" has been developed in social movement studies literature.
A large tradition reads social movements as essentially autonomous from 'the state' at large (meaning all public institutions, from City council to national government). They often define themselves by a position of marginality in the political system characterized by its lack of "routine access" to state decision-making, and using "non-institutional" means to make its claims (Escobar

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and Alvarez 1992; McAdam et al 1996). And their basis is generally their antagonistic relationship to the state, the contentious nature of the claims they make. Institutionalisation as "entering the state apparatus" *ipso facto* signals the death of social movements as such.
A secondary tradition of literature considers institutionalisation not as purely external to the movement (the movement "entering" a public institution through various means), but as an internal process: a shift that social movements, as they grow or consolidate in time, experience in response to increasing organisational challenges (Larson 2007). Building sets of norms and procedures shaping behaviors and expectations, internal governance and representation, nominating or electing members in leadership or coordinating positions or even an internal 'bureaucracy', can be seen as forms of (internal) institutionalisation (Kubic 1998). Others have observed that protests become more routinized and less disruptive in contemporary societies, termed "movement societies" (Meyer and Tarrow 1998); many movements tend to shift to institutional (heard as conventional) strategies as part of their life cycles as well as contextual structures of opportunities (Hipsher 1998).
In both external and internal institutionalisation processes, institutionalisation is rather seen in a negative way: as a betrayal, abandonment or deradicalisation of the movement's cause; the sedation or pacification of its members; and as the likely co-option of its leadership, as prophesized by Robert Michels (1965) in what he calls the 'cruel game', or the 'iron law of oligarchy'. More broadly, institutionalisation of a movement is part of its life cycle and will lead to its de-radicalisation and the subsequent emergence of contestation, internal or external to the institutionalised movement (Hipsher 1998).

Key debates

- *Institutionalisation of a social movement: its demise, or its success?*

Entering in cooperative interactions with public institutions requires a shift in repertoires of action and political cultures, that can amount to an "acculturation" of activists: from a more agonist culture to a more deliberative one, from contention to expertise, from principled denunciation to lobbying and legalism. This acculturation may be bi-directional, as state institutions may be "wildened" in this process whilst activists are being "domesticated" (Neveu 2011): but the process remains largely uneven, all the more (neoliberalised) public institutions have a strong capacity to encompass, digest and contain internal innovations.
However, contemporary scholars of social movements emphasize how crucial it is for them to engage in a multiplicity of strategies and tactics, in order to eventually generate lasting and meaningful change in society. While the impacts of social movements actions are complex and multidimensional (see Empowerment, this glossary), some authors call for a larger vision of movements' strategies and tactics, emphasising that antagonism and cooperation with public authorities are part of a continuum of modes of interaction between society and state. Further, the capacity to generate social and policy change generally requires a diversity and multiplicity of approaches that can be seen as complementary, even if they are not always coordinated. When it is

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coordinated, such complementarity of tactics and positions may be held by one single movement (with a risk of deradicalisation), but more often is based on alliances between several collectives, some being more antagonistic and others more cooperative (a form of bad cop/ good cop tactic).
Mary Katzenstein (1998) suggests it is worth following the 'cause' rather than only the 'movement' to understand change or at least the capacity to act. Studying how the feminist cause has spread into traditional institutions such as the Church or the army in the United States, she suggests it is useful to distinguish between location, form and content of a mobilisation:

> "This presumed inconsistency between movement politics and institutional politics is based on a frequently drawn linkage *of location, form and content*. When social movement actors doing street politics (*location*) opt for or ally themselves with those who use conventional modes (*form*) of political activism such as lobbying or voting, a social movement is generally deemed to have crossed the threshold separating protest politics from institutional politics, and the result is presumed to be deradicalisation (*content*). [...] It is too easy to presume that what occurs in the street is disruptive, and what occurs within institutional contexts is accommodative. But what does 'disruption' means? [...] Disruption needs to be distinguished from 'interruption'. Disruption is about challenges to power that has the potential of compelling change." (pp 195-196, *emphasis mine*).

For Katzenstein, institutionalisation encompasses a change in location, generally a change of form (but not necessarily giving up repertoires of contention), and may or may not lead to a change in goals and objectives. It is what the emerging field of studies on 'institutional activism' is starting to explore.

- *Institutional activism*

Several academic traditions (urban planning, political studies, environmental and feminist studies in particular) in various parts of the world (North America and Europe but also notably Latin America) have stated theorising "institutional activism" - taking some distance from social movement studies to try and unpack what is happening 'within' state institutions when activists become part of it. It is no surprise that it is in countries and moments where social or liberation movements "entered the state" that such theoretical apparatus was developed: US cities after the civil rights movements in the late 1960s and the election of the first black mayors in large cities; public institutions when the Labor Party won the elections in Brazil (under Lula and Rousseff's presidency), or when a democratic government was elected in post-apartheid South Africa. These examples illustrate the importance of context on the process and forms of institutionalization: beyond a purely instrumental vision of relations between public authorities and mobilized groups, institutionalization is also the result of conjunctions and coordination of the concerns and goals of established institutions and activist groups.
Institutional activism was initially defined as the actions of individuals engaged in social movements or civil society, holding a position in an administration and working from it to pursue the cause (Pettiniccio 2012, Abers and Tatagiba 2015, Hysing & Olsson, 2017). The focus was on how links were maintained and gaps widened between activists in the street and activists in the institution.

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This literature emphasised the importance of these links, but also how challenging it was for institutional activists to maintain cooperation and understanding with social movements, given the complexity of administrative and political battles they had to fight, unbeknown to their street partners - and the paucity of the 'successes' they could demonstrate in terms of policy change.
This literature evolved and broadened, to encompass bureaucrats who, even without a direct link to civil society organisations, used their position in a public institution to actively pursue a cause (Clavel 2010, Abers 2019) - the focus becoming less on how their actions related and differed from street activists, but also on how their actions differed from usual bureaucrats (Bénit-Gbaffou 2024) and which repertoires they developed to initiate or sustain dynamics of social change from within the institution. This emerging field of research shows that key to the capacity to act for institutional activists is their capacity to straddle three fields of mobilisation, each one with its own rules : civil society, bureaucracy and political parties. It also stresses the importance of intermediary, mid-level bureaucrats, who are precisely at the interface between strategic planning, administrative and budgeting processes, and grounded social realities.

- *Double the institution ? The libertarian municipalism strategy*

Opposants to institutional activism consider, for their part, that a real alternative can't emerge from institutions and administration erected for and by capitalist interests. Yet aware of the difficulty, and possibly the necessity, to structure, coordinate and enable social movements, locally anchored, to truly challenge and compete the capitalist state with a large radical alternative solution, other paths to institutionalisation emerge.
In the US and North America, subscribers to Murray Bookchin's libertarian municipalism (see municipalism in the glossary) are strong proponent to coordinate social movements, workers union, local assembly and else into local, communal, regional and national networks and assemblies to concur with the state and all of its institutions (Durand-Folco & Van Outryve, 2020).
J. Durand-Folco and S. Van Outryve set out the diversity of political organisation forms adopted by the municipalist movements from north to south and the difficulties to incarnate a durable alternative to municipal council. They also scrutinise the structuration of a first continental confederation and Congress of Municipal Movements which aim to become an alter-institution to states in North America.

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Mobilisation

by Ben Kerste & Philippe Urvoy

An exploration of what academic literature says on some aspects relevant for FAIRVILLE

From “social movements” to “collective mobilisation”

In the last decades, vivid academic debates have taken place within the field of political and social science in order to qualify and analyse the collective action carried out by social groups, through concepts such as “collective mobilisation” and “social movements”. According to Cefai (2007), social movements can be defined as “collective action guided by a concern for the public good to be promoted or a public nuisance to be avoided, and which sets itself adversaries to fight, in order to make possible processes of participation, redistribution or recognition, in favour of civil society”. Within studies on citizen collective action, different authors proposed to distinguish between occasional collective struggles that may be at the origin of social change from “social movements” that necessarily carry a project for systemic and long-term transformations in society.

From the 1960s onwards, a new generation of academics have proposed a distinction between the traditional “social movements" (associated above all with the workers' and socialist movements that emerged from the industrial revolution) and the so-called “new social movements” that gained public visibility in the second half of the 20th century, such as student and youth movements, feminist, environmental or racial minority movements, or the movements emerging from peripheral capitalism, organised from the precarious neighbourhoods of the global South. Among this literature, certain works have taken a particular interest in “urban social movements”, grassroots citizen mobilisation based on the “contradictions” (Castells, 1975) and injustices reproduced in the urban transformation process. The work of Castells led to further reflections on the role of cities in the formation and staging of political protest. For instance, social injustices in cities resulting from density and pollution, real estate speculation and rising rents, missing parks or segregative transport policies often do function as a trigger for wider collective mobilisations. Cities also offer strategic places and resources for mobilisation, such as central squares and public buildings representing the criticised state on the one hand or values of freedom and democracy on the other (see f.ex. the role of the Taksim square in Istanbul, the Maiden in Kiev, or the Tahrir square in Cairo).

While some academics working on social movements underlined its organised and formal, rational and purposeful character, based on shared meaning and common goals, others denied its uniform and constant character and more focused on informality, plurality and difference. There are many conditions to be met to make collective mobilisation processes possible and fruitful. It is important here to remark that successful collective mobilisation doesn’t imply the need to overcome, erase or

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ignore internal pluralities, differences and heterogeneities. However, under which conditions, according to which factors, do collective mobilisations erase? The academic work on collective mobilisation highlights a wider variety of factors that influence the upcoming, course and outcomes of political mobilisation. Some of these factors foster political action and implication, others do face formidable barriers and challenges to them. The central aim of this note doesn't lie in retracing academic debates on the concept of collective mobilisation, but in identifying and presenting different factors that do foster or impede, support or challenge collective action. In doing so, specific links will be addressed to questions that are at heart of the Fairville project : local democracy and social inequalities.

Key Questions

- *Political opportunity structures, the openness of political institutions and state repression*

When a series of urban riots shook the U.S. in the early 1970s, the political scientist Peter Eisinger set out to systematically study forty-three cities to determine their structural differences and commonalities in order to understand the emergence, intensity, and course of the protests. In doing so, he looked for explanatory factors which are located outside of the activists groups in the form of political opportunity structures (POS). "The incidence of protest is (...) related to the nature of a city's political opportunity structure (..., to the) degree to which groups are likely to be able to gain access to power and to manipulate the political system." (1973 : 25). This first definition of POS has been widely discussed and refined in the following decades. A widely accepted distinction is based on the following topics of analysis : the relative openness or closure of the institutionalised political system, the stability or instability of the broad set of elite alignments that typically undergird a policy, the presence or absence of elite allies and the state's capacity and propensity for repression.

Accessible and inclusive political institutions, such as local councils, community boards, and participatory budgeting mechanisms, also play a crucial role in promoting political mobilisation. When institutions are transparent, responsive, and accountable to citizens, they do empower marginalised groups to engage in decision-making processes and advocate for their interests. Inadequate civic infrastructure, including limited access to public spaces, information channels, and community resources, constrains grassroots organisation and collective mobilisation efforts. Without robust infrastructure and support networks, marginalised communities may struggle to mobilise effectively and sustain momentum for social change.

Furthermore, political repression, intimidation or violent interventions of the police and the state can suppress critical voices and undermine collective mobilisation from the bottom-up. Repressive tactics, including surveillance, harassment, and censorship, create a climate of fear and deter individuals from exercising their democratic rights. On the other hand, state repression on political activists can foster unwanted public attention and a wave of political solidarity and financial support. This however requires a specific, culturally informed interpretation of the events. Functioning as what James Jasper calls a "moral shock", the events of repression need to be perceived collectively as intolerable and unjust on an emotional and/or a cognitive level (cf. Jasper 1998 : 409).

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In summary, these reflections on political opportunity structures, the openness or closeness of political institutions, and finally the multiple effects of repression and violence on collective mobilisation can provide interesting references to the Fairville Labs. Especially, the work on the local governance structures and political opportunities can reveal in each city or country specific structural conditions under which marginalised groups and political collectives are likely or not to be engaged in collective mobilisation.

On the other hand, the scope of the POS-approach should not be exaggerated. After all, it is implicitly based on a model of pluralistic democracy in which the successes of social movements are only conceptualised as integration into the given political system. In other words, the participation and integration in a given political order, or even the demand of material support from public institutions, is not necessarily aimed by (antagonistic) political activists .

- *Urban collective mobilisations : between autonomy and cooperation*

Since the 1970's, under the impression of a vivid left counter-culture, many observers stated that the motivation of political groups and organised networks arises not necessarily out of the attainment of specific political goals or the ability of collective mobilisation. One's own everyday practices, especially for parts of so-called new social movements, became part of the political program itself and the defense of (free-)spaces and subcultures were given a higher priority than broad mobilisation. Furthermore, many activists refuse to cooperate with municipalities and the local state. In the context of new urban policies in the 1980's, characterised by the integration and cooperation of alternative political practices actors, a part of political activists radicalised, as they feared to be integrated "in the system" (see Institutionalisation).
However, as it can be carved out at the example of two collective mobilisations in Hamburg, at the same period, many grassroot actors refused the opposition of autonomy and institutional implication as too simplistic and narrow. Case-studies of collective mobilisation around the occupied "Hafenstraße" and the demand for a public "Park Fiction" show the disposition of grassroot activists to identify and invest interstices, inner-conflicts and potentials of support within the institutional order. This implies the assumption that every successful mobilisation, to be attractive to a wider public, needs to overcome a radical position of renunciation. In the concrete example of Park Fiction, this productivity lies in a collective proposal of a public square, co-produced and elaborated over a couple of years by artists, social workers, lawyers, architects and local inhabitants. This successful co-production within a grassroot mobilisation, partially supported by public institutions, obliged the city council, hostile to the project, to enter the sphere of negotiation and co-production. As a result, there is not such a clear distinction of co-production processes taking place within a large variety of grassroot on the one hand, and such co-production processes between institutional and grassroot actors, on the other. A successful grassroot mobilisation rather opens the conditions for wider co-production processes, obliging public institutions to acknowledge the legitimacy of the former.

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Nevertheless, the process of co-production within grassroot movements confronts its heterogeneous participants to overcome internal differences and oppositions. The identification of common goals and values takes place against the background of a common political protest-culture.

- *How to create the basis of cooperation and commonality within grassroot mobilisation?*

Various researchers underlined that vivid civil society organisations, including community groups, advocacy networks, and grassroots movements, serve as catalysts for political mobilisation at the local level. These organisations often provide platforms for collective action, foster civic engagement, and amplify marginalised voices within communities. In this context, strong social networks and bonds of solidarity among community members facilitate collective mobilisation efforts. Different scholars have emphasised the role of social capital to support mobilisations by strengthening in fostering trust, political legitimacy, cooperation, and collective action within communities. However, recent studies related to collective practices in urban space have highlighted the fact that classes possessing higher social capital often tend to impose legitimacy on demands linked to their interests, thus causing an “erasure” of practices and discourses of the lower classes (Adam and Mestdagh, 2019). This observation was also shared recently by groups of activists who perceive cultural activism originating from the middle classes in the city as the Trojan horse of gentrification dynamics. Such debate is currently being raised by stakeholders in several Fairville Labs.

The urbanist Walter Nicholls refers in this context to a shared political protest-culture as a “soft infrastructure such as trust, norms, symbols, identities and emotions” (2008: 4). Social affiliations and alliances, shared identities and political strategies and objectives are as much part of such a culture as the memory of past struggles, and thus the belief in the changeability of one's own circumstances. Common cultural references do allow diverse political activists to overcome inherent diversity and situate their particular, present engagement in a larger temporal and spatial context. This can be a source of meaning, significance and legitimacy. However, such a protest culture must itself be contextually located and questioned in terms of its historical genesis. The fact of such a historical embeddedness of urban grassroot mobilisations can invite some of the Fairville Labs to interrogate the (non-) existence of concrete, vivid precursors in their city, and to explore the historical dimensions of the collective organisation frameworks anchored in the different neighbourhoods and territories concerned.

- *Network groups, brokers and political framing*

As cited above, confronted with complex urban issues such as housing, environmental risks or mobility, isolated grassroot actors often remain “ill-equipped to deal with the problem by themselves.” (Nicholls 2008 : 6). At the same time, different activist groups quickly become confronted to the fragmented and heterogeneous of the protest landscape. Each of these groups have more or less specific political practices and codes, skills and resources, or a certain legitimacy and entry-points to act as stakeholders. We can therefore ask ourselves : how diverse actors are

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able to construct a "political collective" ? First of all, the mediation between different political groups within a wider social network requires a certain cognitive flexibility that can be defined as the ability to understand and take into account the needs, motives, and actions of a great variety of different people simultaneously. This includes the ability to cooperate and to work out common political goals and strategies across obvious social and identity-political differences. The mediation between different social groups is often performed by specific individuals, referred to in the literature as brokers or mesomobilisation actors. More precisely, they perform two basic functions : "*First, they provide a structural integration by connecting groups with each other, collecting resources, preparing protest activities, and doing public relations. Second, they aim at a cultural integration of the various groups and networks in developing a common frame of meaning"*. (Gerhards und Rucht 1992 : 558f.).

Subsequently, other works have questioned the diversity and complexity of the role of leadership within the social movement. More recently, other authors, rather than focusing on the role of key individuals, have proposed the concept of "political framing" in order to refer to "the signifying work or meaning construction engaged in by movement adherents (e.g., leaders, activists, and rank-and-file participants) and other actors (e.g., adversaries, institutional elites, media, social control agents, countermovements) relevant to the interests of movements and the challenges they mount in pursuit of those interests" (Snow, 2013). The reformulation or consolidation of such a frame can, here, engage a diverse network of actors, such as those taking part in co-production dynamics (see Coproduction). The co-production process, such as those developed within the Fairville labs – whether it involves the construction of houses, an urban project or a citizen counter-expertise – can thus involve processes of "frame alignment" – encompassing "*the strategic efforts of social movement actors and organisations to link their interests and goals with those of prospective adherents and resource providers so that they will contribute in some fashion to movement campaigns and activities"*. The co-production can also intervene as a mean to reinforce "frame resonance", helping local actions to resonate with society, institutions or targeted audiences (Idem).

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Municipalism

by Alessio Koliulis & Claire Bénit-Gbaffou

An exploration of what academic literature says on its evolution, debates, and concrete applications

Genealogy and evolution of the term "municipalism"

Municipalism, originating from the Latin *mūnĭcĭpĭum*, which etymologically means "being responsible", refers to an urban settlement that enjoyed a degree of autonomy from Rome. In neolatin languages like Spanish, Portuguese, and Italian the term *Municipio* indicates the public structure where key city governing bodies operate.

In contemporary context, municipalism is an umbrella term describing various trans-national urban political initiatives taken at municipal level, developed in particular since the 2008 financial crisis in Europe and North America. A variety of social movements marked by radical criticism of neoliberalism, of capitalism and its damage to the environment, and of traditional representative democracy, have attempted to be elected in and govern municipalities in a number of countries, marking their difference with national politics. Such "municipalities of change" have developed in particular in Spain, but also in Italy, Germany, the US, as well as in Rojava, Northern Syria.

> *"Municipalism, as we understand it, is defined by a set of related characteristics. First, by the construction of a distinctive political organization that reflects the diversity of the local political landscape and responds to local issues and circumstances. Second, by open and participatory decision-making processes that harness the collective intelligence of the community. Third, by an organizational structure that is relatively horizontal (for example, based on neighbourhood assemblies) and that guides the work of elected representatives. Fourth, by a creative tension between those inside and outside of local institutions: municipalism understands that the capacity for institutional action depends on strong, organized movements in the streets that push elected leaders. For this reason, the movement welcomes pressure from outside the institutions and seeks to open up genuinely democratic decision-making mechanisms within them."*[3]

By extension and beyond this specific political programme and time period, the term "municipalism" is used to analyse any urban politics that share that double belief: 1) a level of autonomy from the State where municipalities have agency in defining their own policies, and 2) a capacity for change

[3] Roth, Laura, and Kate Shea Baird. "Municipalism and the Feminization of Politics." *Roar Magazine* 6, no. 1 (2017): 98-109. https://roarmag.org/magazine/municipalism-feminization-urban-politics/

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starting from the local level and experimenting with electoral politics. Different types of "municipalism" are then distinguished.

The use of the term then requires an adjective to qualify the type of "municipalism" studied. Some authors recently examine "municipal socialism" (and "municipal communism"), developed in the second half of the twentieth century in France, as a form of municipalism: these two left parties ruled municipalities for decades and invented specific urban policies (Lefebvre 2020). Others (Warner, Aldag Kim 2021) extend the term to less radical municipal politics, coining the term "pragmatic municipalism" to describe how Western municipalities try to resist the fiscal austerity and local budget cuts imposed by neoliberal national governments in the US and the UK. In these forms of municipalism, the focus is less on institutional transformation to deepen democracy, than it is on redistributive or socially progressive policies – studies interrogate to what extent specific municipalities have been able to expand or at least protect these policies, in the dominant context of capitalism.

On the other side, the term can take a more radical dimension in the "libertarian municipalism" developed by Murray Bookchin, that has inspired a number of contemporary social movements (in particular in the Rojava region, Kurdish Syria) – where the main objective is to transform the State into a democratic confederacies of cities, towns and villages, leveraging local institutions. Such transformation would take place both from outside municipalities, through the development of self-organised local initiatives, and from the inside, by gaining elections to transform municipal institutions.

> *"The immediate goal of a libertarian municipalist agenda is not to exercise sudden and massive control by representatives and their bureaucratic agents over the existing economy; its immediate goal is to reopen a public sphere in flat opposition to statism, one that allows for maximum democracy in the literal sense of the term, and to create in embryonic form the institutions that can give power to a people generally".*
>
> Murray, Bookchin. "From Urbanization to Cities: Toward a New Politics of Citizenship." (1995). https://www.social-ecology.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/Libertarian-Municipalism-The-New-Municipal-Agenda.pdf

To some extent, the transnational movement of Fearless Cities, launched by the Mayor of Barcelona, Ada Colau, shares this feature: a political agenda rather than an analytical concept, a radical energy focused on transforming institutions, deepening democracy, and constructing social models away from capitalism. In this context, it is important to highlight how Barcelona en Comu, the electoral platform that supported Ada Colau and eventually won power in Barcelona, emerged in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, by expanding practices of solidarity between residents and migrants, particularly around the issue of housing. In Spain, this crisis left approximately 300,000

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families without homes as they were evicted for failing to repay their mortgages. In 2009, the Mortgage Victims' anti-eviction platform (PAH) was established under the motto "people living together, for one another," and Ada Colau, the current Mayor, served as PAH's spokeswoman.

> *"The PAH are in many ways the best migrant rights organisation in Spain, because they organise around a common need – housing – and say, 'I don't care if you have got documents. If they try and evict you, I'm going to show up at your house to block it, if you will show up at mine when they try to evict us!'..."*
>
> Carlos Delclos, Housing Activist, interviewed by Rosemary Bechler in 2018 (OpenDemocracy)

Key Debates around Municipalism

- *Old Municipalism (Devolution) vs. New Municipalism (Anti-Austerity):*

Historically, in the West, municipalism has gone through phases. The "Old Municipalism" of the post-war era focused on building council homes and demanding – and often obtaining – regional devolution of power. This golden era of publicly managed local administration was cash-rich (1950-1980) and was aligned to national dynamics of building the Welfare State, modernist in its approach to the public interest and traditional in its trust in representative democracy.

It contrasts to the "New Municipalism" born in reaction to, and to fight neoliberal austerity from the 1990s onwards in the Western world. The "New Municipalism" movement emerges against the backdrop of the post-2008 financial crisis and consequent anti-austerity movement and is categorized by Thompson (2020) into three distinct socio-political variations: 1) Platform Municipalism, 2) Autonomous Municipalism and 3) Managed Municipalism. (See below).

Figure 1. Thompson, Matthew. "What's so new about New Municipalism?." Progress in Human Geography 45, no. 2 (2021): 317-342.

- *Is municipalism indicating a way to follow, or is it a tool to unpack what is going on?*

Municipalism, like many terms inspired by policy and social dynamics, lends itself to two different types of uses: normative (describing what "should be", what "could be") and analytical (describing what "is" and helping us to make sense of it). The normative use focuses on the more radical aspects of municipalism, seen as new collective aspirations; the analytical use interrogates the realisation and legacy of "municipalities of change" in the early 21st century.

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In the normative (and dominant) use, municipalism refers to a radical political agenda articulated by Bookchin in 1995 and developed by the Fearless cities network in 2009, through a manifesto defining three core principles: i) feminization of politics, ii) emphasis on concrete actions, and iii) the international commitment of the municipalist movement. It proposes a radical agenda, around the engagement of movement in municipal politics in order to drive democratisation. This radical dimension of the term opens to consolidating theoretical models of municipalism (Thomson 2020), focused on municipal policy agendas, electoral strategies, philosophical and political positioning.

The analytical use of the term interrogates what it takes to transform a social movement into an electoral front and then into a governing coalition – by looking (for now empirically) on what changes municipalism has brought about, in terms of democratic institutions, urban policies and urban practices, and to analyse the realities, but also the limits and obstacles to change. Whist this interrogation on the conditions of possibility of urban policy change (reformist or radical) is not new, the link with other theories (such as "progressive cities") does not yet seem to have been made (Lefebvre 2020).

- *Municipalism and Progressive Cities*

The question of "what does it change to elect a new, radical, leftist" government in a city, is not new to urban studies. It is the thread that structured the Community Power Studies debate in the US since the 1930s, and continues till today. This debate opposed pluralists (arguing that urban policies are determined by a diversity of shifting social forces, unequally mobilised and ruling in turns) and elitists (believing that unequal socio-economic structures leave very little room for manoeuvre, little hope for progressive agendas to dominate any municipalities, and this questions the reality of democracy in American cities). It is also the key question that led Clarence Stone to theorise the concept of "urban regimes", when interrogating why the electoral victory of a Black mayor (supported by civil right movements and progressive environmentalist civics in Atlanta) did not lead to any major urban policy change (1989). It is also what was documented empirically by Pierre Clavel, Norman Krumholz, John Forester and other planners, who constituted a repertoire of progressive planning stories to try and consolidate a network of "progressive cities" and reflect on the consolidation, possibilities and constraints of such policies, since the 1970s – in particular in the nexus between municipal administrations, local councillors and civil society. Although these experiments relied on "old municipalism", where the equity agenda entailed more redistributive than participatory objectives, these narratives and theorisation strongly echo the rising empirical analyses emerging today around the achievements and difficulties of "new municipalism".

- *Municipalism and the problem of scale*

In examining the debates on municipalism, it is also critical to discuss "scale" and its politics. As delineated by Mark Purcell in "Urban Democracy and the Local Trap" (2006), the local trap is the wrong belief that local scales are inherently more democratic than larger scales, such as regional, national, or global levels. In the context of municipal politics, Russell's "Beyond the Local Trap"

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(2019) uses this concept to claim for the necessity of re-envisioning municipal strategies that avoid over-romanticising the local.

Purcell argues that power dynamics and inequalities are prevalent at any scale, including the local. This notion challenges the idea that smaller scales are naturally more equitable or democratic. Furthermore, the definition of "local" is socio-cultural, political and is not fixed. The "local" is continuously reshaped by political, economic, and social forces, impacting municipalism. An exclusive focus on the local can overlook the larger forces shaping urban spaces, such as the State, thus constraining broader democratic engagement. To avoid the local trap, Purcell advocates for a "multi-scalar perspective". This perspective acknowledges the interplay between different scales and the significance of considering the connectivity of local issues with national and global contexts. For municipalists, this should involve a practical application of democratic principles and practices, moving beyond the presumed virtues of the local scale. Nevertheless, some cities are pionnier in the domain of ecology (mobility, energy...) since they are less under pressure by gaz and oil lobbies and prone to experiment with decentralized innovations governed by rooted groups and alliances with local authorities (Deboulet, 2022). Fribourg in Germany or Copenhagen has been pioneering both slow mobility and co-housing programmes. Local authorities allied with civil society organizations are also key to think collectively alternatives to metropolitan competition and organize a collective long term planning engagement (about Antwerpen, see Albrechts, 1016).
In relation to municipalism and the problem of scale, Russell's "Beyond the Local Trap" (2019) and Roth, Russell, and Thompson's "Politicising proximity: Radical municipalism as a strategy in crisis" (2023) address the challenges of scaling up municipalist alternatives by emphasizing the role of "proximity" for municipal politics. First, the authors argue that municipalism strategically focuses on the urban scale. This choice is important because it emphasizes both geographical and human proximity as a vital component in fostering systemic change and counter-hegemonic struggle. Secondly, proximity highlights the politicisation of local relationships, such as those found in deliberative assemblies at the local level, promoting a deeper democratic engagement. Thirdly, proximity plays an important role in responding to on going crises. The local or the municipal level, due to its proximity to citizens and migrants, is more effective in addressing immediate crises. Lastly, and consequently, proximity emphasises direct, face-to-face, decision-making processes, deepening the deliberative nature of municipal democratic politics.

Relevant examples

The recent wave of municipalism, especially in Cities of Southern Europe (Spanish cities since 2015, Italian cities), has inspired a rich literature trying to assess how these newly elected movements actually attempted, often failed, sometimes succeeded, in "doing municipal politics differently" in their respective cities. This literature is still in the making – often focusing on relatively small objects (the communing of the governance of an art building in a neighbourhood, the adoption of a charter, various attempts at municipalisation of basic urban services, reframing

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at the margin large capitalistic urban projects, etc), but gradually moving towards a deeper understanding on broader policy dynamics at municipal level.

- *Naples*

In Naples, the "Urban Civic and Collective Use" framework guides the management of the Commons. Under this system, commons develop a written declaration, created through an open public assembly, detailing their community utilisation and maintenance of a property. This declaration is then recognised by the Municipal Council. The process of establishing this framework was not without hurdles. One major challenge was finding a common ground between occupiers and state institutions. A prime example is the Asilo Filangieri building's occupation. The occupiers sought a regulation that would recognise the civic use of the building, without transferring ownership to a specific group. The municipality ultimately acknowledged the right to common use after understanding the activities taking place in the occupied spaces. A platform, commonsnapoli.org, has since been created to share insights and experiences from urban civic and collective use.

- *Bologna*

Bologna adopted the Regulation on Collaboration between Citizens and the City for the Care and Regenerations of Urban Commons, often referred to as the "Bologna Regulation". This regulation fosters collaboration between the city and its citizens through "collaboration agreements", determining shared responsibilities for the care of urban commons. Despite retaining the legal ownership of buildings and spaces with the municipality, over 200 Italian cities have embraced this model.

- *Barcelona*

Barcelona has championed several city-community co-governance programmes. Initiatives such as the Plan to Boost the Social and Solidarity Economy focus on fostering ethical enterprises within the city. with mentoring, training, funding, cooperation, and participatory activities. A significant barrier faced was the demand for shared governance structures. To address this, the "Participatory Area" was established, facilitating community input on city policy matters. Furthermore, the Citizens' Assets programme allows participatory management of urban assets, recognising community-led public services. The city established a Community Monitor to evaluate assets based on criteria like territorial needs, social impact, internal democracy, and ethical principles. As of 2021, 63 facilities were managed under this programme. Another innovative initiative is Barcelona Energía, a metropolitan electricity company, promoting sustainable energy, and part of an attempt to "re-municipalise" basic urban services, as has been the case (partly unsuccessfully so far) for water services.

Finally, Barcelona's City Data Commons is a ground-breaking initiative pushing for technological sovereignty, citizen empowerment, and ethical data practices in the city. Recognizing the dangers of big tech monopolies (like AirBnB for housing), the project developed open-source platforms and infrastructure to regulate the power of tech platforms by protecting citizens from harmful data practices. Barcelona's City Data Commons has also developed a Technological Code of Conducts that provides ethical guidelines for technology use in the city. This ensures responsible

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data collection, analysis, and application, prioritising the public good under the banner “the right to the digital city”.

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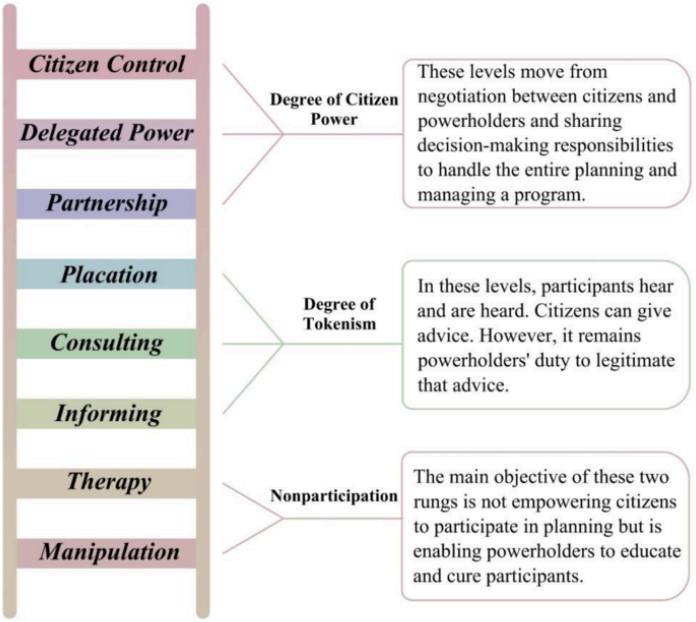
Participation (in planning)

by Alessio Koliulis and Claire Bénit-Gbaffou

An exploration of what academic literature says on its evolution, debates, and concrete applications

Genealogy and evolution of the term

Participation in planning, as a concept, has its roots deeply embedded in civic engagement theories. Initially, it was seen as a means for communities to have a say in local governance and decision-making processes. Over time, this evolved to encompass broader aspects of social and urban planning. Theorists like Sherry Arnstein were instrumental in this evolution. In her seminal 1969 paper, Arnstein presented the "Ladder of Citizen Participation," which offered a spectrum of participation levels, from manipulation to citizen control. This model emphasized the depth and complexity of participation, highlighting a desirable transition from mere consultation to active involvement of citizens in decision making. Such evolution reflects the growing acknowledgment of the diverse needs and voices within communities, emphasising the importance of inclusive planning.



After Arnstein, quoted in Nasr-Azadani, 2022

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Key Debates

- *Collaboration vs. conflict and the role of insurgent practices*

A key debate in planning theory is between collaborative and insurgent planning approaches, encapsulating the tension between reformist and revolutionary paradigms within participatory planning. Specifically, the exploration of collaborative planning as a process of communicative action (Healey, 1996) versus insurgent practices that challenge modernist planning foundations (Holston, 1995, 2009) illustrates the dynamic interplay between collaboration and conflict in seeking just planning outcomes.

Faranak Miraftab provides a theoretical foundation for insurgent practices. Miraftab (2009) emphasizes insurgent planning as a tactic for addressing injustices through imaginative, transgressive practices. These discussions on insurgent planning highlight the creation of "invented" spaces for participation that challenge conventional power structures and advocate for counter-hegemonic, grassroots involvement in urban development.

- *(Lack of) Participation in Development*

Andrea Cornwall's article 'Locating Citizen Participation,' published in 2002, offers a critical examination of the concept and implementation of citizen participation in development practices, which became a buzzword in the 1990s. Cornwall delves into the dichotomy between theoretical ideals of participatory development and the often superficial, tokenistic application in real-world scenarios. She discusses how participation, originally intended to empower and involve citizens directly in decisions affecting their lives, frequently becomes a mere formality, lacking genuine influence and engagement. The paper advocates for a rethinking of participatory approaches to ensure they truly reflect democratic ideals and effectively incorporate the voices and needs of the citizens they are intended to serve, transforming development practices into more inclusive, empowering, and genuinely participatory processes.

- *Beyond the ladder – participation to do what*

Andrea Cornwall (2008) nuances Arnstein's ladder of participation, explaining that developing participation in planning does not mean that each decision on each issue needs to be broadly and deeply participatory – this would lead to a paralysis of collective or public action and a fatigue of all participants. She urges all to clearly define what is participation for, to decide on what and why participation is important, participation of whom and on what matter – in order to define the form of participation that is relevant for that objective. From this urge for "clarity through specificity", she presents a multiplicity of forms of participation, of unequal breadth (number of people involved, scale of participation) and depth (number of iteration and importance of the deliberative dimension in the process).

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- *Participation as Planning*

Frediani and Cociña's 2019 article "'Participation as Planning': Strategies from the South to Challenge the Limits of Planning," explores innovative participatory strategies in urban planning, particularly from the Global South. They present case studies where participatory methods – "participation as planning" – have been successfully integrated into planning processes, demonstrating how these approaches can lead to more equitable and sustainable urban development, and the potential of participatory planning to challenge and redefine traditional planning paradigms.

- *Invited and invented spaces of participation*

Faranak Miraftab (2004) proposes the terms of "invited" versus "invented" spaces of participation, contrasting two dynamics and forms of participation depending on its initiator – public authorities or formal institutions "inviting" civil society to participate, versus community-based movements claiming for decision-making power in urban governance, policies or projects ("inventing" its forms of participation). Many authors have qualified invited spaces of participation as tokenistic or manipulative and celebrated invented spaces as authentic and people-centered. More recent work sees the two types of spaces of participation as interrelated, connected and marked by constant processes of hybridisation (institutionalisation and contestation): part of a broader interface between state and society where both are needed in order to take part in urban governance.

- *Participation from the public authorities' point of view*

Most of the literature on participation analyses it from the citizens or communities' point of view. White (1996) argues that it is important to understand participation from the institutions (seen as power holder) point of view, and proposes a typology of interests differentiating the various uses institutional actors may have of participatory processes. While her typology is intended to criticise institutions and to caution communities and activists against depoliticised participation, it is also stating how crucial it is to consider the rationalities of all actors involved in a joint process, as participation (or coproduction) is.

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Form	What 'participation' means to the implementing agency	What 'participation' means for those on the receiving end	What 'participation' is for
Nominal	Legitimation – to show they are doing something	Inclusion – to retain some access to potential benefits	Display
Instrumental	Efficiency – to limit funders' input, draw on community contributions and make projects more cost-effective	Cost – of time spent on project-related labour and other activities	As a means to achieving cost-effectiveness and local facilities
Representative	Sustainability – to avoid creating dependency	Leverage – to influence the shape the project takes and its management	To give people a voice in determining their own development
Transformative	Empowerment – to enable people to make their own decisions, work out what to do and take action	Empowerment – to be able to decide and act for themselves	Both as a means and an end, a continuing dynamic

After White (1996), https://360participation.com/models-of-participation/

Relevant example

Participatory Budgeting

Participatory Budgeting (PB) is a democratic innovation from Brazil, first implemented in Porto Alegre in 1989 by the Workers Party. Born amidst a struggle against dictatorship, PB represents a significant leap in direct democracy, empowering communities to decide on the allocation of public resources. This process combines elements of direct and representative democracy, ensuring tangible outcomes such as improved infrastructure, which significantly impacts people's daily lives.
PB often operates on an annual or biennial cycle, involving neighbourhood meetings, assemblies, discussions, and votes. The success of this process hinges on the effective implementation of decisions in subsequent cycles, which requires overcoming challenges such as disillusionment, corruption, and bureaucratic hurdles. For instance, Grenoble's experience showed that without diverse participation, including women, innovation in project development can stall. (See: https://oidp.net/en/publication.php?id=1882)

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Globally, PB is on the rise, with over 6,000 municipalities across 50 countries practising it by 2022. It's expanding in regions like Russia and Turkey, where democratic aspirations challenge authoritarian regimes. PB's scope has also evolved, shifting from redistributing resources for welfare projects to income-generating initiatives, crucial for addressing land use and climate adaptation.

In their analysis of participatory budgeting (PB), Yves Cabannes and Barbara Lipietz (2018) highlight the potential of PB to serve as a transformative governance mechanism. They categorise the bases of PB into three distinct logics: political, aimed at fostering radical democratic change by enhancing citizen engagement and political participation; good governance, which seeks to strengthen the relationship between public institutions and citizens, promoting transparency and accountability; and technocratic, focusing on the efficient use of public resources through data-driven and expert-led approaches.

This categorization highlights the different nature of PB and suggests that its impact on governance is largely determined by the primary logic driving its implementation. The authors argue that while PB can significantly transform governance structures by promoting civic education and empowering citizens, such transformations are not guaranteed and depend on the specific context, including the scale of implementation, the motivations behind its adoption, and the degree to which it genuinely empowers citizens versus serving as a tool for instrumentalisation.

The complexity of PB's role in governance is further influenced by how these logics interact with existing political and social structures, determining whether PB becomes a genuine instrument of democratic transformation or is co-opted into existing power dynamics.

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